



Oswestry

Oliver's operation sparks a fundraising frenzy

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Welshpool

It's full steam ahead as war loco gets a revamp

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Border Pride

Eight pages of the best businesses in the area

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Building to start at livestock market

WORK on a £45 million redevelopment at Oswestry Livestock Market to build a new supermarket and cinema will begin this month.

Final contracts have been agreed to start work on the site on Shrewsbury Road in a project that will eventually bring 400 jobs to the town.

Developers Liberty Merican will move on site soon, said Roy Jones, chairman of Oswestry Livestock Auctions.

The first phase will see the livestock market moved and a lorry park, cattle sale ring and sheds built. It will pave the way for work to start on a new supermarket, cinema, and two restaurants in 2014.

Mr Jones said: "We are pleased to announce that we have now completed the final legalities with Liberty Merican and Morrison's and the contractors' tenders for the redevelopment of Oswestry Livestock Auction are in hand. This means that we will be commencing the long awaited multi-million pound works to our livestock market in January 2014.

"We will complete our work by late 2014 and then Morrison's will commence their store alongside the new five screen digital Cineworld, together with Frankie & Bennys and McDonald's, with opening dates anticipated for mid-summer 2015."

Body found near bridge

POLICE are investigating the discovery of a woman's body beneath a bridge on the A483 Chirk bypass on Monday afternoon.

Kevin Evans, spokesman for North Wales Police, said: "Police and other emergency services attended a location beneath the bridge just north of McDonald's on the Halton roundabout where they discovered the body of a female. The female was pronounced dead at the scene."

"At this time North Wales Police are treating the death as 'unexplained' the matter will be referred to HM Coroner for North East Wales."

REGAL PROJECT TO SEEK ARTS FUNDS

CAMPAIGNERS behind an ambitious project to create a £500,000 entertainment venue in Oswestry plan to seek capital funding from the Arts Council.

The Oswestry Regal Project team plan to buy and then renovate the former Regal Cinema in Leg Street after being boosted by its adoption within the Oswestry 2020 town plans which sets out a vision for the future of the town.

The group says 2014 promises to be an exciting time for the project at the ex-cinema, which closed in 1994 and is currently leased by the YMCA organisation as a charity shop. They say the building, which could cost between £400,000 and £500,000 to buy, would be an ideal site for a new development to benefit the community.

by Graham Breeze

Civic group in plea over shops plan

MEMBERS of Oswestry Civic Society have backed plans to bring long-awaited neighbourhood shops to the east of Oswestry, but have asked if developers can have another look at the design of the shops.

An area was set aside several years ago by the now defunct Oswestry Borough Council for the shops to serve the area's residents.

Plans for three shops, with flats above them, have now been lodged for the land off Cabin Lane in eastern Oswestry.

Papers in support of the bid by applicants Dennis Edwards (Developments) Ltd say the design of the shops will add to the area.

They say: "The design will produce a landmark building which will contrast with the surrounding buildings in style and colour of materials to provide a clean, bright building with minimal future maintenance."

The principle of the plans has been welcomed by Oswestry Civic Society who say the shops are "much needed" in the Cabin Lane area.

But it adds: "These shops will be an important feature in the community and it is a pity that the proposed design is rather mundane."

"We appreciate that if the project is to be financially viable costs must be kept down, but would something a little more imaginative cost very much more?"

Campaigner Chas Nicholson is leading a team which hopes to transform the building into a multi-purpose arts, theatre and performance venue.

Mr Nicholson said the group was moving forward with its plans and had been boosted by its adoption in the 2020 town plans.

He said: "The project was adopted by the Oswestry 2020 Town Plan, which recognised that 'the town clearly lacks a large auditorium type space, which has the potential to boost the local economy and help regenerate the town centre."

Conversion

"The next task for the project is to form an Incorporated Charitable Organisation and press ahead with the endorsement of the town and Shropshire Councils and West Midlands Arts so that an approach can be made to the Arts Council for capital funding to buy the building and carry out the conversion."

"Oswestry Regal Project is under no illusions as to the difficulty of this task and the challenges that lie ahead."

"The building is presently just a shell and the interior will need a complete rebuild, followed by a fitting out with state of the art facilities for drama, cinema and music shows as well as restaurant and bar areas."

"The Local Joint Committee of Shropshire Council has promised to release funds for a feasibility study in the New Year and this will get the ball rolling."

"There are many challenges to be faced but the future for professional entertainment in the centre of Oswestry looks bright."

With a population of more than 17,000 and a catchment area of about twice that, supporters say Oswestry, the second largest town in Shropshire after Shrewsbury, needs such a town centre venue.

They also say there would be various benefits to Oswestry. Among them would be a chance to stimulate the economy.

Trolley dash bags £350



The winner of the dash Kate Pinder with Andrew Faulks. Picture: Laura Duffield.

A LUCKY shopper got a Christmas treat when she won a supermarket trolley dash and bagged herself more than £350 worth of food and drink.

The competition for the dash was run by the Oswestry & Border Chronicle and Stan's Superstore in St Martins.

It was won by Kate Pinder, from Llangadfan, near Welshpool, who collected the tokens in the *Chronicle* to enter the draw.

Mrs Pinder, 32, from Llangadfan, near Welshpool, said she had been astonished when she answered the phone - on Friday the 13th - and was told she had won.

She said: "My grandmother, who lives in Oswestry, saw the competition and she asked me if I'd do a trolley dash. I said okay and she said she'd collect the tokens and enter if I did the dash if we won."

"I really enjoyed it, and I'd really like to thank Andrew Faulks from Stan's and the *Chronicle* - I'm really really grateful."

Andrew Faulks, manager of Stan's Superstore, said: "I think the fact that she's been in the shop before, and the layout of our shop helps. Because we have all the special offers by the front door, everything you'd want for Christmas was all in small area, so she really did fill her boots."

"She had £354 worth in the trolley. It was supposed to be capped at £250, but we let her have it all because it's a one-off."

Warning signs on road slow motorists

THE installation of speed warning signs near a Gobowen school is already having an effect on how fast motorists are driving, safety campaigners have said.

The vehicle activated signs were installed and switched on by Shropshire Council on St Martins Road in Gobowen before Christmas, flashing a 30mph warning when sensors detect vehicles are breaking the speed limit.

They were installed after a long-running campaign by villagers worried about the speed of traffic on the road.

Many families cross St Martins Road to reach School Lane to get to Gobowen Primary School.

The signs have been installed near junction of St Martins Road and School Lane in a bid by highways bosses to slow traffic down.

Hundreds of villagers petitioned for road safety improvements on the road.

Gobowen grandmother Dot Basham said the signs were already having a positive effect on how fast drivers were travelling.

She said: "I have been watching the cars as they come down the road and they have definitely been slowing down when the lights flash."

Mrs Basham said despite the signs campaigners still want a pedestrian crossing on St Martins Road.

Trio praised in honours

THREE men from the Oswestry and Welshpool areas were named in the New Year's Honours list.

John Barry Lloyd Roberts of Oswestry was awarded the MBE for services to athletics and the community.

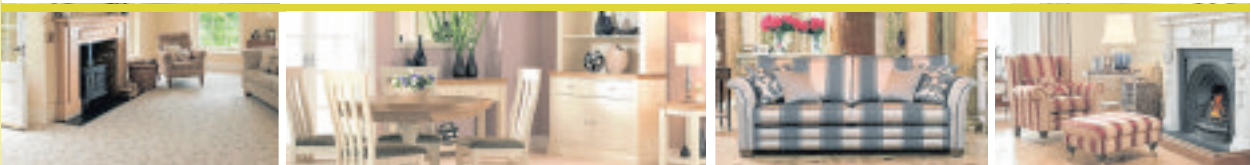
Ivor Geoffrey Hawkins, 72, from Pontrobert, near Welshpool, was awarded a British Empire Medal (BEM) for his voluntary services to the community.

A BEM also goes to Evan Maldwyn Evans for voluntary services to the community in Adfa and Cefn Coch.

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NEWS

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Mayor's pledge on bid to bring in new firms

by Sue Austin

THE mayor of Oswestry has issued a pledge to attract more businesses and jobs to the town in the new year.

Councillor Chris Schofield said despite a tough few months there were signs of economic recovery and said making the town prosperous would be a priority for 2014. He said Oswestry Town Council had tried to do what it could to boost business, including investing in markets and offering free parking.

Cemetery project in appeal for volunteers

A PROJECT to discover more about the history of Oswestry's cemetery is looking for volunteers to help catalogue records.

The scheme was launched in September to conserve the cemetery records, repair the first headstone, carry out a photographic survey, research the history of the site and create new information leaflets. During the first three months staff and volunteers have begun to dig through boxes of records, sending some documents to Shropshire Archives to be conserved in preparation for cataloguing.

Photographic volunteers have had training and started to submit images of the gravestones, which will eventually be uploaded to a website so volunteers can transcribe the inscriptions.

Updates on the project are available at www.oswestry-tc.gov.uk under the "news" menu. Volunteers can contact the project manager Sara Downs at sara.downs@shropshire.gov.uk or on (01743) 355354 or (01691) 680222.

Projects include the ongoing Oswestry Gateway development, which includes a KFC and Starbucks at Mile End, and the plan to restore the stretch of the Cambrian Heritage Railway between Oswestry and the main line at Gobowen.

It has also been revealed that the first phase of the £45 million redevelopment of the town's livestock market at the Smithfield site would start in the new year.

Councillor Schofield said: "Bringing new business and jobs to the town remain firmly at the forefront of our discussions."

"We have just completed the Oswestry 2020 plan that places large priorities on where investment should be targeted as part of shaping the town vision for the next few years. Many people shared in the consultation and discussions and we now have a plan that Oswestry Town Council and Shropshire Council can use as a community mandate."

Councillor Schofield added that one thing in the town's favour was the strong community spirit, which he said had been evident at a number of events and functions he had attended.

He also said plans were under way for major events in the town, including the 100th anniversary of the start of World War One and the restoration of the town's memorial gates at Cae Glas Park.

Oliver's op sparks funds push



Oliver Harrison, third from left, with his brother Harry, dad Stuart Harrison and mum Emma Lawrence.

PEOPLE in Oswestry have got behind fundraising for the children's heart unit where five-year-old Oliver Harrison had his heart transplant this summer.

Oliver and his three-year-old brother Harry have already enjoyed a perfect Christmas, with a trip to the panto, family gatherings and a friend's Christmas party.

Mum, Emma Lawrence said it was something that Oliver had never experienced before.

Her son had his live-saving heart transplant at the Freeman Hospital in Newcastle upon Tyne, one of only two centres in the UK offering paediatric heart transplant treatment.

He is also being cared for at the Birmingham Children's Hospital, where he has been with his dad, Adam, for routine blood tests.

Following news of the popular young boy's transplant, offers of fundraising for Chuf, the Children's Heart Unit Fund, based in Newcastle, have been flooding into the family.

Emma, who works at the family run shop, Lawrence's in Oswestry, said: "Customers

and people in Oswestry have been so good. One customer asked for donations to Chuf instead of presents for her 50th birthday and others have given donations in lieu of Christmas cards."

"Kidszone in Oswestry held a cake day for us and the family will also be continuing fundraising. Adam will be running the Great North Run again, this year accompanied by his brother-in-law, Stuart."

She said Oliver still needed regular hospital visits but said his quality of life had improved beyond belief.

"Things that other families take for granted at Christmas, like parties and pantomime visits we have never done before," she said. "Before, Oliver has always been extremely tired and his illness led to him being very anxious."

"We went as a family to the pantomime at Oakengates and seeing his face lit up was just magical. Oliver had always been too anxious to be able to enjoy something like that before, a side effect of his heart problems."

Ancestral home on market for £5m

THE ancestral home of one of Shropshire's best-known political figures has gone on the market for £5million.

The Brogyntyn Estate, on the edge of Oswestry, was once the seat of the Ormsby Gore family.

Its most famous member was William David Ormsby-Gore, the fifth Baron Harlech, who was British Ambassador to America and a friend of President John F Kennedy.

But the current Lord Harlech sold the estate more than a decade ago after it had lain empty for 15 years.

Agent, Knight Frank says the hall is being sold by the current owners, a private family.

On the market in 14 lots, it is described as "an important Shropshire seat in need of repair with extensive development potential".

The estate includes parkland, a walled garden and former terraced gardens, a stable block, a lodge cottage and a gardener's cottage.

There is also a range of period farmbuildings, a former shooting lodge, two lakes and woodland and pastureland.

Today Jonathan Bengough from Knight Frank, said: "The main hall is in need of refurbishment but there is extensive development potential."

Library workshop for knitting fans

OSWESTRY library has organised two knitting workshops for this month.

The first will be held on January 18 from 1.30pm to 3.30pm. It will be run by Becca from 'Alterknit' and the cost is £2.50.

This will be followed by a second workshop on January 22 from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Ros Hornbuckle will show how to knit without a knitting pattern.



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NEWS

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Spending ideas to go under spotlight

A PARISH council could spend £3,000 on its village institute in the new year.

It is one of a number of ideas due to be discussed at a meeting in Weston Rhyn soon.

The parish authority will set its precept on January 6 and members will also look at a number of ideas for the year ahead.

As well as improvements to the village institute, members will also decide whether to follow suggestions that include spending £1,000 for work to the recreation ground, £3,200 for grounds maintenance and also a increase funding for street lighting.

In a report to the meeting, which will be held in the public institute at 7pm, clerk Roger Dyke said the precept on the council tax was complicated this year because of continuing uncertainty over the support grant from Shropshire Council.

Last year council tax band D payers, paid a yearly sum of £23.42 for the parish precept.

Staff at school helping charity

STAFF at a school in Oswestry raised cash for charity by writing festive greetings to their colleagues on a Christmas tree.

The initiative was run at the Marches School where teachers made a donation to write messages on tags and hang them on the tree in the staff room.

The tree was coordinated by Mary Richards and the appeal is now in its ninth year. About £315 was raised.

Staff also donated items to fill two large festive hampers that were raffled off for charity.

Family pay tribute to their son, 21, killed in road crash

by Andrew Morris

THE family of a 21-year-old footballer who died in a car crash on a busy road have paid tribute to "the nicest man you will ever meet".

Andrew Lloyd, from Withy Avenue in Forden, near Welshpool, died following a crash between a green Peugeot 306 and a blue Kia on the A483 between Newtown and Abermule.

His family have released a statement paying tribute to Mr Lloyd, who played for Forden FC and worked at McDonalds in Newtown and the Flash Leisure Centre in Welshpool, saying his death will leave a "deep void" for all who knew him.

The statement says: "Tributes have been flooding in following the tragic and untimely death of a popular young man."

"Andrew was driving west along the A483 towards Newtown when the car he was driving collided with a vehicle travelling in the opposite direction."

"Family and friends have described him as a caring, fun loving, out-going son and an absolute gentleman."

"Andrew will be remembered as one of the nicest young men you will ever meet."

Great man

"Andrew was a keen footballer and played for several local teams, his premature passing will leave a deep void with everyone who knew him."

Neil Breeze, manager of Forden FC, had previously described Mr Lloyd as a "perfect gentleman."

He said: "He was a great man who would do anything for anyone and he got along with everyone he met."

Rhian Moore, Dyfed-Powys Police spokeswoman, said the force is re-appealing for witnesses to the crash, which happened shortly after 10pm on December 21, to come forward.

She said: "We are appealing for witnesses to the collision to come forward and we would particularly like to hear from people who may have seen either of the vehicles in the moments leading up to the crash."

"The family kindly request that they are now left alone to try and come to terms with their loss."

Mrs Moore said anybody with information should call the force on 101.



Andrew Lloyd

Noise worry at homes plan near railway

PLANS to build a housing estate near to a railway line should be tested to make sure residents do not suffer with noise problems or from possibly contaminated land, council officers have said.

Proposals have been lodged with Shropshire Council to transform a former coal-yard in Gobowen into a housing estate.

The coalyard is beside the Shrewsbury to Wrexham railway line and Wrexham Housing Trust wants to build 22 homes there.

But Shropshire Council public protection officers have asked for a noise assessment to see "if specific glazing and other mitigation measures are required".

The officers say the noise assessment should be carried out before work begins to "protect the health and wellbeing of future residents".

And the officers say there is also a possibility that the site could be contaminated because of its previous use as a coalyard.

They say investigations should be carried out to check for contamination and if any is found, remediation work should be carried out.

Six two-bedroomed bungalows, eight one-bedroomed flats, five two-bedroomed houses and three three-bedroomed homes will be built if councillors approve the scheme.

Trust officials said it would address the "immediate" need for affordable homes in the village.

The housing group has consulted widely on the plans.

Top displays win competition



Chairwoman of Oswestry Chamber of Commerce Heather Noble, owner of Pickles in Church Street Tony Lowry and staff Kim Barkley and Laura Hunt. Pictures: Ian Sheppard.



Heather Noble with winner Lynda Jones of Llynclys Hall farm shop.

THE best dressed festive shop window and market stall winners in Oswestry were presented with their prizes as the results of the town-wide competition were revealed.

Run by Oswestry Chamber of Commerce and voted for by readers of the Oswestry Chronicle, the contest aimed to find the best dressed Christmas shop window and the best dressed stall in the town's market hall.

Gift shop and cafe Pickles in Church Street took the shop window prize with a silver and red themed display.

And Llynclys Farm shop's stall in Powis Hall won the equivalent prize for best dressed stall in the festive competition.

Tony Lowry, owner of Pickles, said the display had been a team effort. We sat together in mid November and we had a bright idea of two windows for two themes, one red and one silver, and filled it with all sorts of things, Alma Pierson, our shop manager, put it together," he said.

Lynda Jones, from Llynclys Hall Farm Shop, was just as surprised to win the market prize. "I didn't think we'd stand a chance of winning," she said.

Heather Noble, chairwoman of Oswestry Chamber of Commerce, said: "The competition is targeted to bring in a bit of Christmas to the town centre. It's a great opportunity for businesses to really show off to the public and to attract customers."

NEWS

in brief

Contest plan for young musicians

PLANS are being drawn up for a youth music festival in Oswestry.

Young musicians from across Shropshire and neighbouring counties, will take part in the four-day Oswestry Youth Music Festival.

Three days of competition will culminate in a final competition in which the winners of several key classes will battle it out for two top trophies.

The event will be held from February 27 until March 2 at Christ Church and Oswestry Methodist Church in the town centre.

The festival is sponsored by Oswestry Town Council with other businesses and individuals sponsoring cups and trophies.

One of those involved, Councillor Martin Bennett, said mayor Chris Schofield would present the trophies at the final concert on March 2.

Wedding fair to be held at hotel

BRIDES-to-be will be able to look at everything from dresses to flower arrangements at a wedding fair at the Wynnstay Hotel, Church Street, Oswestry.

The fair will be held on February 27 from 6.30pm to 9.30pm and will include a catwalk show.

Entry will be free and there will be a prize draw.

For more information call the hotel on (01691) 655261 visit the website www.wynnstayhotel.com

Meeting date for children's group

THE Sticky Fingers children's craft group will hold its next meeting from 3.15pm to 4.15pm on January 20 at Whittington School, near Oswestry.

Sessions cost 50p per child. For more information contact Natalie Charley on (01691) 650488 or Ruth Jones on (01691) 657547.

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NEWS

MP joins fight for GP surgery

NORTH Shropshire MP Owen Paterson has joined the fight to save a village walk-in doctor's surgery.

Mr Paterson, who is also the Environment Secretary, said he had written to Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group about the plans to close the service provided by Chirk Surgery at The Institute in Weston Rhyn, near Oswestry. He described it as a blow to people living in Weston Rhyn and pledged to do what he could to maintain the service.

It comes after members of Weston Rhyn Parish Council gave their backing to local people campaigning to keep the walk-in surgery open.

by Pam Kingsley

The surgery is run two days a week but staff at Chirk Surgery want to close it. There are plans to open a new £2.4 million purpose-built clinic in Chirk next spring and staff believe it will offer people in Weston Rhyn a better service.

More than 50 people attended a public meeting in Weston Rhyn last week to discuss the issue and a petition with more than 300 signatures calling for the service to be retained has been handed in.

Mr Paterson said: "I've written to the commissioning group and I hope to have a reply to my letter after Christmas."

"It's obviously a blow to the people of Weston Rhyn, and at such short notice."

Councillor David Lloyd, who represents the village on Shropshire Council, said the issue was made more complicated as it involved two health authorities – Chirk Surgery is in Wales and overseen by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, while Weston Rhyn is in Shropshire.

He said: "We all know the health service is going through a traumatic situation in Shropshire, having to take a look at key services. There's change everywhere."

"But the preference and need for GP services are paramount in the thoughts of the people in Weston Rhyn."

Weston Rhyn parish councillor Angela Bright said the community feels so strongly about losing the surgery because they feel it is a vital service for the village.

Watch out, Barney's about



Harry Hamilton, from St Martins, with Barney the owl in Red Square, Oswestry.

THIS magnificent owl has been leading the fight to clear Oswestry's streets of pigeons while shoppers buy their Christmas goods.

Barney the European eagle owl was brought into Oswestry town centre to frighten off pigeons which lurk around Memorial Square in the hope of picking up scraps from passers by.

The pigeons sat huddled on a rooftop near by as Barney took up position by the Christmas tree in the centre of the square.

His owner Harry Hamilton, from Close Encounters in St Martins, said: "We come around quite regularly to scare the pigeons," he said.

"Barney puts his wings out and it frightens the birds away."

But the shoppers in the town were less

easily frightened, despite Barney's 67in wingspan, fierce talons and stern expression.

And he even allowed some of the younger passers-by to stroke his feathers, under Mr Hamilton's watchful eye.

Mr Hamilton said Barney is quite a laid-back bird.

"I've had him for 20 years and he's 25. They'll live for about 40 years," he said.

"I got into keeping birds by mistake. A friend had a buzzard and asked me to look after it for three months and it turned into three years. Then I got more birds – barn owls, falcons and so on."

"You do need a lot of space – each bird needs a 10ft by 12ft aviary. I've got a very long garden."

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Events group aims to raise overseas aid

A community group raised more than £1,230 this year for Hope House Children's Hospices.

The group, known as PurpleFish, celebrated its success with a Christmas event with local bluegrass duo Little Red Bird at the Last Inn in Hengoed. PurpleFish is an Oswestry-based events organisation which was created by members of the congregation at the town's Hope Church.

Members organised 14 events during the year with more than 700 people attending.

Now PurpleFish plans to raise money for an overseas project with an open mic night in Wilsons Wine Bar on January 24.

For more information about PurpleFish visit www.purplefish.org.uk or contact group organiser VJ Lonsdale on 07964 726407 or e-mail vj@purplefish.org.uk

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NEWS

01691 668094

New sculpture park plan could bring jobs to town

SCULPTURES from a museum in Ironbridge, in danger of being shipped to America are to be moved to Oswestry.

The collection from the Ironbridge Open Air Museum of Steel Sculpture is being dismantled and will be recreated in the grounds of the British Ironwork Centre on the outskirts of Oswestry in a potential, multi million pound project which could bring more jobs to Oswestry.

It will become part of a new Shropshire Sculpture Park being built by Clive Knowles, managing director of the British Ironwork Centre.

Mr Knowles said the museum of steel sculpture, established over 20 years ago, had some of the most inspired and creative works of art in steel and iron.

"Now, with the help of the British Ironwork Centre, moves are already in place not only to stop these wonderful and unique works of modern and traditional art from being shipped to the United States of America, to reside in parks in Kentucky and other such locations, but to ensure they remain here in their original birth place, and particularly on public view within Shropshire" he said.

The collection was created by the late and renowned sculptor and museum co-founder, Roy Kitchen.

Mr Knowles said he had plans to create walking and audio trails within the Oswestry sculpture park.

by Sue Austin

"This has been a most unexpected opportunity that required us to tender offers against those of the American parks. We have been extremely lucky to have persuaded the museum's trustees to keep these sculptures in Shropshire."

Pam Brown, co-founder and chair of trustees of the museum, said: "Shropshire was my first loyalty and I've pledged my support long term as a future patron of what will be Shropshire's only outdoor sculpture park, now in Oswestry".

Architects and landscaping specialists are now preparing proposals.

Mr Knowles said: "The cost of such a vision could run into several millions of pounds and it will undoubtedly ensure Oswestry continues to become an area of popularity and interest."

Ben Knowles, Operations Director, said: "We could become one of the area's largest employers."



Moving one of the large sculptures to the British Ironwork Centre near Oswestry.

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FEATURES AND COMMENT

01691 668094

BREEZE ABOUT TOWN

BOTH the Ambulance and National Health Services come in for plenty of bad press so I'm starting the new year by handing out a bucket load of praise.

Last week a medical emergency saw me needing help from both organisations and the response was nothing short of amazing.

An early hours call to Shropdoc was dealt with in a calm and professional manner – even if the calmness was on the other end of the phone to mine.

The 999 service arrived in less than five minutes, easily beating the national target time, and on top of that the friendly Wales Ambulance Service paramedics were helpful and reassuring in their approach.

Across the border at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital there was no sign of the expected delay, despite the emergency department having to cope with the aftermath of a Christmas "Mad Friday" night out.

In fact the treatment I received was simply first class and after a couple of days care I was home in time for Christmas thanks to an attentive nursing staff.

It's very easy for us to criticise. After all these organisations are up there to be shot at, and in some cases with plenty of justification.

But I think we should all appreciate that what we have is still the envy of the world.

□□□

AMBITIOUS plans to transform Oswestry's former Regal Cinema into a £500,000 entertainment venue hinge on funding being sourced.

Campaigners from the Oswestry Regal Project have managed to get their proposals recognised by the Oswestry 2020 Town Plan because it has the potential to boost the local economy and help regenerate the town centre.

There's also recognition from Oswestry Town and Shropshire Councils along with West Midlands Arts but as yet no sign of cash support.

Unless private funding can be found the Arts Council won't seem the only hope for the ambitious group.

It would be brilliant news for Oswestry to have this wonderful town centre premises back in use as a cinema and theatre venue. Fingers crossed!

□□□

ON THE sporting front a Welshpool owned horse romped home on Saturday to win the Welsh Grand National to the delight of local punters, who backed the chance at odds of 20-1.

The bookies took a pounding for once as Mountainous, owned by James and Jean Potter, took the prize at Chepstow to really put Welshpool on the racing map.

Why didn't anyone remind me to get a bet on?

Bruce rolls out new book on a 'forgotten' car man



Charles Rolls of Rolls-Royce



Bruce Lawson

by Toby Neal

HAVING just written a book about Charles Rolls, the "forgotten man" of motoring, Bruce Lawson thought there was something that he really ought to do – get a Rolls-Royce himself.

So recently he has become the proud owner of a 1986 Silver Spirit.

"I bought it because I thought I ought to," he said.

"I'm coming up to retirement in about 18 months' time and, having written the definitive work on Charles Rolls, I thought it was incumbent on me to get one. It seemed the right thing to do.

"I'm lecturing next year to Rolls-Royce enthusiasts all over the country.

Wonderful

"All they're going to say is 'What sort of car have you got?' so it's a bit of peer pressure."

Mr Lawson, who is from Montgomery, added: "I'm a member of the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club and 90 per cent of them have one."

"My car was £124,000 new when it was built in 1986 and has been converted to LPG at a cost of £1,500."

"I've paid £7,500 for the car and the LPG conversion. It's wonderful value for money and isn't going to go



Bruce Lawson of Montgomery who has written a biography of Charles Rolls of Rolls-Royce.

down in value. I'm an accountant and if I look after it for 20 years it might be worth even more, although that's not the reason I bought it.

"I drove it back carefully from Caerphilly. And why not? I'm 67 now and if I can't have what I want now, when will I have what I want?"

The Rolls will be a second car, alongside his Vauxhall.

The book, meanwhile, is a first for Mr Lawson, who has had a varied life, including being a rugby international in Jamaica and standing unsuccessfully for Parliament on three occasions.

He was inspired to research it by Andrew Marr's The Making of Modern Britain, in which he described Rolls as a "London driving instructor and all-around petrol age adventurer".

Mr Lawson says it was a fascinating voyage of discovery, often through papers never previously researched.

"Strangely enough, I'm not a car

person but realised that nobody has written a real biography of Rolls for 47 years.

"The last comprehensive biography of Rolls, who is the forgotten man in the Rolls-Royce story in my view, was by Lord Montagu of Beaulieu who has kindly written the foreword.

"It's written for the generalist and is more about Rolls the man than Rolls the cars.

"That's been done to death by people who know far more than I do.

"Although written in a light-hearted style, the book is meant for all, and not just car enthusiasts. It has been very well received by the classic car fraternity."

Charles Rolls was a wealthy aristocrat – and early motorists needed to be rich, as Victorian and Edwardian cars could only be afforded by the super-rich, with even used examples costing the modern equivalent of tens of thousands of pounds.

Rolls was just 19 when the notorious Red Flag Act was repealed in 1896. He took part in dangerous inter-town races, and set a new world land speed record which was never formally ratified.

He is best known as the co-founder, with Henry Royce, of the car firm that bears both their names and is a byword for quality, luxury and elegance.

Killed

There were more strings to Rolls's bow, who was also a balloonist, and learned to fly early aircraft.

Ultimately his taste for adventure was to claim his life at the age of 32, killed in a flying accident at Bournemouth in 1910.

• Charles Rolls of Rolls-Royce is published by YouCaxton and is available from the website go to www.charlesrollsofrollroyce.com

CHART TOPPERS RAY SPILLER



Over 50 years ago The Music Charts started and this column will look back at the charts this week, 10, 20, 30 40 and 50 years ago

TEN YEARS AGO... 2003

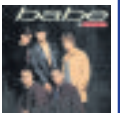
Father and daughter Ozzy (real name John Michael) and Kelly Osbourne topped the charts for one week with Changes. The single was released by Black Sabbath in 1972 but only reached number 8. In this



version Kelly changed the lyrics. A few days before this song went to number one Ozzy had a serious accident at his Buckinghamshire home and broke his collarbone, several ribs and a vertebra. He made a full recovery.

TWENTY YEARS AGO... 1993

On this week in 1993, Take That were number one with Babe. It held the top spot for one week. This was their third number one record of that year and five more followed in 94 and 95. The band broke up in 1996. Robbie Williams forged a successful solo career. However, the band reformed in 2005 and have enjoyed massive success.



THIRTY YEARS AGO... 1983

For five weeks The Flying Pickets held the top spot with Only You. This meant that the last four months of 1983 had only had

three different number one records. One member of The Flying Pickets was a guy named Brian Hibbard who went on to have parts in Corrie and Emmerdale.

FORTY YEARS AGO... 1973

Slade's Merry Christmas Everybody is, without a doubt, one of the most popular Christmas songs of all time. It's only been number one once though, and that was in 1973 for five weeks. This single proved to be the band's last number one hit (they had six) and their biggest selling single. The Wolverhampton lads, including frontman Noddy Holder, still tour from time to time.



FIFTY YEARS AGO... 1963

The Beatles third hit record, and first Christmas number one, came in 1963 with I Want To Hold Your Hand. The single became the biggest selling single in British history until Wings's Mull of Kintyre in 1977. The Beatles went on to have



17 number one records both in the UK and USA.

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LETTERS

Working to protect elderly in the area

THE past year has been a difficult one for older people. Last winter, 1,900 people in Wales alone – most over 65 – died from preventable cold-related illnesses, a 50 per cent increase on the previous winter.

It was also the time when older people were statistically more likely to cut back on their heating and eating.

In 2013, thousands of older people, many with conditions such as dementia, were conned out of their money by dodgy traders and scam mail.

Ill-health was also a problem for over-65s, with the Welsh Health Survey 2012 showing that 62 per cent of over-65s in Wales were overweight or obese.

In 2014 Age Cymru will be working with our charity partners to improve the lives of our elderly.

We feel it is unacceptable that older people can be targeted by criminals seeking to take advantage of them.

This is why Age Cymru will be campaigning to make sure they receive increased protection through our Scams and Swindles campaign and Dementia Project.

It's time to celebrate the fact that we're living longer and largely healthier lives, but we must also not shy away from tackling the problems older people face.

People need the advice that will help them to have a healthier lifestyle.

IAN THOMAS
Age Cymru

I'm proud of our county!

WE'RE told that the postmark is to be made anonymous.

The answer is for everyone to write to the left of the stamp – not over the stamp of course – in capital letters "from Shropshire" or "from Ellesmere". If asked to use an address which doesn't include the town, I put it in – with "be proud!" alongside!

AJ ASTLEY
Ellesmere

Jabs not cull

MAY I congratulate the RSPCA on their stance to vaccinate badgers. Owen Paterson blunders on with a 70 per cent kill leaving 30 per cent perhaps with TB.

R. D. ANDERSON,
Ellesmere

Charity thanks for public support

WITH the new year upon us, we wish to thank everyone in Shropshire who supported Meningitis Now in 2013.

Only through people's kind help can we fight the dreaded disease on all fronts – funding preventative research, raising awareness and supporting survivors and their families. We're amazed by everyone's generosity and dedication, especially considering the economic climate.

The year has been very positive for the fight, with the first vaccine for meningitis B – the most common form

of bacterial meningitis in the UK – receiving its licence.

It was also made available privately earlier this month, but we continue to argue that it should be offered to all youngsters for free on the NHS. However, you may have seen some tragic, high-profile cases in the media recently as cases peak during winter.

These stories sadly show we need to keep developing new and improved vaccines for all strains of meningitis and septicæmia (blood poisoning).

We will not stop until everyone is

protected, but until then people should know the symptoms and we urge readers to make a new year resolution to fight meningitis.

A fundraising challenge is the perfect way to make a difference. We've many awe-inspiring activity ideas including daredevil skydives, treasured treks and fantastic foreign adventures. For more information, call 0800 80 10 388 or visit www.meningitisnow.org

SUE DAVIE
Meningitis Now

Out for a winter's stroll 100 years ago



IT'S Brongarth, in the Ceiriog Valley west of Chirk, and the lack of leaves on the trees shows that it's winter. This is an old postcard view which looks to be going back at least 100 years. It was loaned by our regular contributor, postcard collector Ray Farlow.

Befriending service says thank you

CHUMS Befriending Service thanks Sainsbury's in Oswestry for kindly donating a cake for its Christmas lunch at Qube on December 11.

We had a great turnout and it was a valuable opportunity to thank our volunteers for all the hard work they do throughout the year.

The project, launched in July, already has a thriving team of volunteers to help people who may feel lonely or isolated or need help with their shopping.

The Christmas lunch was just one of the many social events which will be held at Qube over the next year.

If you would like to know more about Chums please call 01691 656882 or e-mail v.hughes@qube-oca.org.uk

VICTORIA HUGHES
CHUMS
Oswestry

LETTERS to the Editor

POST
Readers' Letters,
Oswestry Chronicle,
Kelley, Telford TF1 5HU

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E-MAIL
letters@oswestrychronicle.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number of the writer. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters

Grateful thanks to staff at orthopaedic

I WOULD like to highlight the excellence of the Orthopaedic Hospital at Oswestry.

On December 9, my father, aged 94, was admitted to Kenyon Ward to have an elbow replacement after sustaining a fall earlier in the year.

Under the care of Mr Hay and Dr Hatton, surgeon and anaesthetist respectively, he received an outstanding level of care. They afforded him every skill and personal attention, with great respect at all times. He was admitted to the ward by third year student 'Steph', who undertook her duties with diligence and old-fashioned tender loving care.

To all those who came into contact with Joe Willetts, thanks you for doing a great job.

ANNETTE RUSHTON
Welshpool

Anger over decision to take funds

I WRITE to express the anger, frustration and disappointment farmers feel after the Welsh Government made the unilateral decision to place its farmers at a significant competitive disadvantage compared to the farmers in the rest of the UK and Europe.

The decision by the minister, Alun Davies, was to siphon away nearly £300 million from the bottom line of Welsh agriculture in the next seven years.

He says this money will be spent on rural activity but he has no plan on how or where.

The decision by our minister means that he has decided to take the 'common' out of CAP.

ED BAILEY
President
NFU Cymru

Thanks to everyone for help this year

ON behalf of SSAFA, the largest and oldest Armed Forces charity, I would like to give thanks to the caring and generous people of Shropshire for their support during 2013.

On December 13 we were in The Square, Shrewsbury, for the last time this year, working alongside the Army careers recruiting team.

Yet again the number of people who stopped to find out more about us and our life-long support of our Armed Forces personnel – both veterans and serving – and their families was huge.

A massive thank you to all who donated and/or stopped to assure us of support this year. Your generosity, especially in these challenging times, is widely appreciated.

Please be assured that every penny collected goes to those in need.

On behalf of our street awareness team, thank you for your kind words and for helping us to dispose of all the mince pies.

MIKE MCCABE
SSAFA Shropshire

TB not a dilemma

In response to Daniel McDowell's recent comments on the bovine TB dilemma, there really is no dilemma.

The Government has made the difficult, but science-led, decision to go ahead with badger control in two areas of the country where the disease is endemic. Evidence from these pilots will undergo rigorous scientific scrutiny.

Every available tool, including a targeted cull of wildlife, cattle testing, movement controls, bio-security and vaccination, when it's available, should be used to eliminate TB.

The best scientific evidence, and the experience of other countries, shows that employing all available measures at the same time can have a significant impact. Mr McDowell mentions the lack of badgers in New Zealand, but over there the possum population was riddled with the disease. Pro-active culling has seen a reduction in TB in cattle.

JOHN MERCER,
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SHOULD WE HAVE RE-MADE OUR WILLS WHEN WE BECAME CIVIL PARTNERS?

Q: My partner and I named each other as sole beneficiaries of our estates when we made Wills in 2008, assuming these would stand after we entered into a Civil Partnership last year. However, a friend has told us this is not the case. Please can you clarify the situation?

A: Any Will made prior to becoming Civil Partners would automatically have been revoked when your Civil Partnership was registered, so unless you have your Will re-written you could die intestate. Under intestacy law your partner would only receive the first £450,000 of your estate, the remainder being divided equally between your partner and any children of the family. If there are no children to consider, any surviving parents or siblings you had when you died would stand to inherit a share of the estate. It is therefore essential that you make a new Will to ensure your estate is dealt with in accordance with your wishes.

If you own a property together you should check whether you purchased it as 'joint tenants', or as 'tenants in common'. Without clear instruction a solicitor acting for you in the purchase may have assumed that you wished to purchase the property as 'tenants in common.'

With a joint tenancy everyone on the title has an undivided interest in the property, i.e. owning equal and undivided shares in the property. With tenants in common, one tenant could own a greater share than the other and if one tenant in common dies without a valid Will their half of the property would pass firstly to any children they had. If there were no children, under intestacy rules parents would inherit and if they were not alive then siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins and then more distant relatives – but crucially not to the surviving partner of an unregistered relationship, be that a same sex couple or otherwise.

Further information relating to this question is available from Alison Monaghan, a Solicitor with GHP Legal.

For information relating to any other legal matter please call GHP Legal on 01691 659194 or visit www.ghplegal.co.uk. For Personal Injury and Family matters we offer a FREE legal diagnostic clinic every Wednesday 12-3pm (no appointment necessary). GHP Legal holds the Law Society Lexcel Quality Mark Accreditation



NEWS

01691 668094

Premier League chance for youngsters

YOUNG footballers are being invited to train alongside Premier League players and coaches.

Ball Sports Community Coaching has teamed up with West Bromwich Albion to offer coaching for children aged five to 14.

Any youngster who joins in the coaching sessions at Oswestry School's pavilion will be eligible for selection.

Those chosen will join the Ball Sports Albion Football Academy, and could find themselves playing against a Baggies team.

Neil Prescott, who along with Steve Lalley carries out most of the coaching, said: "The partnership will allow us to provide WBA FC Academy with any players that the ability and attitude to possibly develop their skills with the help of WBA FC."

The sessions are held on Fridays from 6pm to 7pm and cost £3 per week.

Call 07817 021068.

Team triumphed

OSWESTRY School's netball season is off to a flying start after the U16 team scooped top honours in the North Shropshire County Plate Tournament. The team played William Brooks School, The Marches School, Church Stretton School and Concorde College.

Ambitious plans to restore rail link move a step closer

AMBITIOUS plans to restore a rail link between Oswestry and Gobowen have moved a step closer after housing trust officials agreed to hand over a parcel of land to campaigners.

Land to the east of a former coalyard in Gobowen has been gifted to Cambrian Heritage Railways by Wrekin Housing Trust to aid the project to recreate a rail service between the village and Oswestry. The land will be used as a car park and a footpath and cycle way.

The land has been handed over by the trust as part of its plans to turn the former coalyard into a development of 22 affordable homes. The plans have been submitted to Shropshire Council and a decision is expected in March.

by Iain St John

Drink-driver hit pregnant woman

A MOTORIST who drove into a pregnant woman while over the drink-drive limit has been warned she could face a jail sentence.

Clare Marie Janicki, 29, was turning from College Road into Llys Road in Oswestry when she ran into Gillian Varley and her 39-week pregnant niece, Kayleigh.

Gillian suffered a shattered shoulder, a cracked rib, cracked pelvis and injuries to her head, while Kayleigh suffered only minor injuries and her baby was unhurt.

Janicki was arrested following the incident on September 29.

A breath test showed that Janicki, of Hawthorn Grove, Oswestry, had 78 microgrammes of alcohol in 100ml of breath – more than double the drink drive limit.

Janicki admitted charges of drink-driving, failing to stop after an accident and driving without due care and attention when she appeared at Shrewsbury magistrates. Janicki will be sentenced at Shrewsbury magistrates court on January 16.

Six two-bedroomed bungalows, eight one-bedroomed flats, five two-bedroomed houses and three three-bedroomed homes will be built if councillors approve the scheme, and trust officials said it would address the "immediate" need for affordable homes in the village.

Backed

Members of the Cambrian Heritage Railways group have been campaigning for years for the rail link to be built.

They have backed the housing proposal, saying they would fit in with the railway plans and allow a new platform to be built at the station.

A design and access statement lodged in support of the housing development said: "The adjacent land located to the east of the site forms part of the contracted land for the proposed Cambrian Heritage Railway community project, to link Gobowen to Oswestry through sustainable transport."

"In response to this a section of land situated to the east of the site has been gifted to Cambrian Heritage Railways for enabling access and facilitating assistance in creating and providing additional car parking for use by the railway."

"This will subsequently form part of Shropshire Council's proposed plans to incorporate a footpath/cycleway across the former coal yard land."

Memorial dance aids charity



Organiser Jeanette Kirkham is seen handing over the cheque to Tony Dart, chairman of Leukemia Lymphoma Research's Oswestry branch at The Wynnstay Hotel.

A DINNER dance in memory of Oswestry businessman Ray Kirkham raised £2,400 for charity.

Mr Kirkham was a partner in the family furniture and removal business Ray Kirkham Removals and since his death the family have been raising cash on an annual basis. This year the Ray Kirkham Memorial Charity Bash raised £2,400.

Organiser Jeanette Kirkham is seen handing over the cheque to Tony Dart, chairman of Leukemia Lymphoma Research's Oswestry branch at The Wynnstay Hotel, where the event was held.

Event in memory of Matthew a success

A FUNDRAISING raffle and auction in honour of a teenager who collapsed and died due to an undiagnosed heart condition has raised more than £5,000 for charity.

The cash was raised for the CRY for Matthew appeal in memory of St Martins teenager Matthew Dewhurst. Matthew, 17, died last year.

His parents Chris and Sue Dewhurst launched the CRY for Matthew campaign to pay for the costs of staging heart screening days at sports clubs.

The screening days pick up any heart conditions and campaigners say they are a vital tool in preventing tragedies such as the one which hit the Dewhurst family.

Mrs Dewhurst said the cash had been totalled up from a fundraising auction and raffle, held at the Albrighton Hall Hotel near Shrewsbury last month, and a total of £5,178 was raised.

"The first screening dates are due to be announced in the New Year. Guests came from all over the county to support the ball. Young Sudden Cardiac Death currently kills 12 young people every week in the UK."

The next fundraising event will be a golf tournament at the Carden Park Resort in Cheshire on April 11.

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NEWS

Services facing inquest scrutiny

THE WAY in which various bodies dealt with an incident involving a Chirk teenager will come under the microscope at an inquest next year.

Yale Howarth, a 15-year-old pupil at Ysgol Dinas Bran, Llangollen, was found hanged at his home in Black Park, Chirk, on January 23. He was a talented drummer who played with the local band The Grammes.

A pre-hearing was held in Ruthin at which some of the issues were discussed by John Gittins, the coroner for North Wales East and Central, and lawyers representing Denbighshire County Council, Wrexham County Borough Council and the Howarth family.

The Wrexham authority's involvement came through social workers who played a part in the case, and it was also agreed that the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board should be regarded as an interested party because of the involvement of the school nurse.

It is understood that all the authorities were concerned to some extent in an investigation into an alleged incident involving the teenager.

After consulting the barristers the coroner said he felt it best for him to sit alone instead of having a jury. A second pre-hearing is to be held.

Ladies still find time for lunch after four decades

WHEN a group of friends sat down for their monthly lunchtime get together it was like the clock had been turned back.

For it is something the women have been doing for more than four decades.

The 'ladies who lunch' at the Sweeney Hall near Oswestry once a month first got together in the 1970s when they were all neighbours in the Prince Charles Close and Middleton Road area of Oswestry.

And although only one of them, Mavis Humby, still lives in that area of town, the friends still meet up every month without fail.

Mrs Humby said although individuals might miss a month or two because of holidays or ill health, the 10 all looked forward to their get togethers.

"This time was our Christmas lunch and sadly Mrs Val Williams couldn't join us because she was ill."

"We first started meeting up about 43 years ago, when my daughter was little."

"We were neighbours and we all had children about the same age."

"At first we would have coffee together in each other's houses and then we started going out for coffee."

"When the children started at school we could meet up for lunch, at the Beachcombers in Leg Street and then the Griffin."

"Others joined us along the way."

"When people started moving away from the area of Oswestry we decided we would stay in touch and so the monthly lunch started."

"For many years we have been going to the Sweeney Hall where Sean looks after us so well."

Happy

At 73 Mrs Humby is the second eldest of the group, with the youngest in her mid 60s.

"We have celebrated happy times and helped each other through the bad times," Mrs Humby said.

"We started out as young mums and are still together as grandmothers."

Although the monthly lunch is a women only zone, the husbands sometimes team up on a joint evening out with the group of friends.

"Some of us celebrated New Year's Eve together," added Mrs Humby.



An enjoyable evening at the Sweeney Hotel in Oswestry for Shelia Ricketts, Joyce Cawkwell, Kathy Innes, Ceinwen Danby, Margaret Davies and Mary Griffiths, with Jackie Rogers, Mavis Humby and Mary Richards seated.

01691 668094

Attack on plans for downgrade at hospital

A PROPOSAL for the potential downgrade of the A&E department at a hospital which serves communities in parts of Shropshire is "totally ridiculous", a councillor has claimed.

Councillor Ian Roberts, who represents Chirk on Wrexham County Borough Council, said the plans for Wrexham Maelor Hospital were "potentially detrimental" for the tens of thousands of people on both sides of the Shropshire/Welsh border who use it.

Welsh Assembly health minister Mark Drakeford has confirmed the A&E department at Wrexham Maelor Hospital is one of three in North Wales which may be downgraded. The other two are at Ysbyty Gwynedd in Bangor and Glan Clwyd Hospital at Bodelwyddan.

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board said no decision had been made while Mr Drakeford has said downgrading is one of the options.

Councillor Roberts said: "For anything to be downgraded at the Wrexham Maelor is totally ridiculous."

"The hospital serves Wrexham, the largest town in North Wales, and also serves a larger area around it. It serves quite a large built-up area for about a 10 to 15-miles radius including parts of Shropshire."

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It's full steam ahead as war loco gets a revamp

by Andrew Morris

IT'S a tale fit for any soldier – playing a key role supplying the front line at war before being captured by the enemy at the end of the conflict.

But this yarn doesn't belong to a plucky private – it is the story of No 10 Sir Drefaldwyn – a steam locomotive built in France and named after Montgomeryshire, which supplied military railways run by the Nazis during the Second World War and now plies its trade in Welshpool.

It was then "captured" by American forces which found it in storage in Austria after the war.

These days the loco enjoys a more sedate life ferrying tourists along the Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway.

And parts of the train have now been sent to an engine shed in Shropshire for repairs as part of a £40,000 restoration project.

Engineers at the Severn Valley Railway in Bridgnorth will spend about six months working on the locomotive's boiler to make sure it is ready to run along the Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway during the busy summer tourist season.

The work is being carried out to meet legal requirements to refurbish boilers of steam engines every 10 years, and specialists will strip the boiler down before piecing it back together.

The engine – titled No 10 Sir Drefaldwyn – was built by Société Franco-Belge at its Raisemes works in France, and supplied the German military railways in March 1944.

It was stored at a depot in Mittersill, Austria, before being captured by the



Dave Howell of the SVR works on the WLLR10 Sir Drefaldwyn from Welshpool, 1944 built in France for Austria.

American Occupation Forces at the end of the war.

The locomotive was then used on a number of Austrian railways until it was sent to Mid Wales in 1969, when it was given its Welsh-sounding name following a vote by railway members.

It has worked on the railway, which runs through the Banwy Valley, between Welshpool and Llanfair Caereinion, ever since.

Duncan Ballard, boiler shop and loco hire manager at the Severn Valley Railway, said workers at Bridgnorth have been carrying out more repairs on steam engine boilers in recent times.

He said: "It's a specialist job, which we're seeing more and more of in

Bridgnorth. Boilers basically have a 10-year life-span before they have to be refurbished by law.

"It's a lot of work, which involves stripping the whole thing down.

"It's the first job we've done for Welshpool despite them being fairly close by.

"The line wants the boiler back up and running for the summer and autumn season.

"We get a lot of work from outside the SVR and, if we had more space and workers, we'd be able to take even more work on.

"We have two people employed currently who just deal with work from outside sources."

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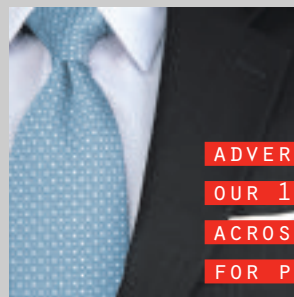
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The collage features four main images: a two-story brick house with a red door, a large white-framed conservatory with multiple windows, a black front door with a small window, and a window energy rating chart. The chart is titled 'Energy Window' and shows a scale from A (green) to G (red), with 'A' marked in a green box. Below the chart is a logo for 'OSWESTRY' with a stylized door icon. To the right of the conservatory is a logo for 'PLANITHERM' with the tagline 'Clearly the most energy efficient window glass'. Below the door image is a 'Secured by Design' logo with a blue star and the text 'SBD Official Police Security Initiative'.

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FEATURES & NEWS

01691 668094

Councillors welcome work at station

PLANS to spend £1.4 million on improvements at Chirk railway station have been welcomed by local councillors.

Campaigners have been battling for years for access improvements at station. Only one side of the track is accessible to the disabled.

The station is set to be brought up to modern standards next year when a new steel footbridge and ramp are put in.

The plans have been lodged with Wrexham County Borough Council planners by Network Rail.

Clwyd South Assembly Member Ken Skates has welcomed the news.

Mr Skates said the work would "make a massive difference" to commuters in his constituency.

He said: "Campaigners in Clwyd South have long called for improved access for disabled people at Chirk Station, which is an important stop on the busy Shrewsbury to Chester line, and - like them - I am hopeful the plans will be approved.

"The footbridge will provide wheelchair access to both sides of the north-south platform for the first time and will make a massive difference to commuters, and could also have a positive effect on tourism in the area with the expected increased footfall."

Jessica proves dyslexia is no barrier to education success

AN Oswestry teenager came home for Christmas after a whirlwind first term at university where she proved her dyslexia was no barrier to success.

Jessica Tomley, 18, was raised on Middleton Farm, and in September packed her bags for Shropshire's only university, Harper Adams, near Newport.

In early December she added another string to her bow, representing Harper Adams students at the Royal Welsh Winter Fair in Builth Wells, Powys.

She said it was a welcome opportunity to get back to her Welsh roots.

"My mum is Welsh - she's from Pant - and my dad is part Welsh. Some of his family farm near Builth, so when I had the chance to step in for a student ambassador at the last minute, I gladly accepted," she said.

"I had been to the Royal Welsh Show but never the winter event. It was great because so many people would drop in to the stand for a cuppa and a catch up - people of all ages. You would get recent graduates, and we could talk about what they were doing now, as well as older folk who either went to Harper Adams themselves or had sons, daughters or grandchildren who studied here. They all had tales to tell of what they did at Harper."

Jessica, whose dad runs a mixed beef, sheep and arable farm, is on the Extended Foundation Degree Programme (EFDP), studying business and marketing. The EFDP is an alternative route to higher education for people who either don't have the right qualifications to apply for an undergraduate degree, or who don't want to go down the traditional route of studying for A-levels before applying to university.

She said: "I chose Harper Adams because the EFDP path was right for me and I wanted to stay in the agricultural field. I have dyslexia, which makes traditional academic study difficult, so I wanted to work specifically towards the career I want, rather than choose and complete four A-level subjects before progressing. I want to

WOMEN OF SUBSTANCE

with Pam Kingsley



stay in the farming industry and become a buyer. I think my ideal job would be as a cattle dealer.

"Another thing that attracted me to Harper Adams was the support provided to students with learning difficulties. I have been supplied with a computer and get help with note-taking and sitting exams, so it takes the pressure off and allows me to compete equally with the other students.

"When I was working at the Welsh Winter Fair, there were a few enquiries from students in similar positions to me, so I really enjoyed being able to talk to them about my experiences and encourage them to apply for the course they are interested in."

Despite living within an hour's drive of Harper Adams, Jessica opted for the full university experience and lives in a student hall of residence on campus.

"It's great, like living on one big farm, because there's a commercial farm on site, and plenty of like-minded people all living in one place," she said.



University student Jessica Tomley is proving dyslexia is no barrier to success.

Gallery is keen on recruiting art tutors

A THRIVING art gallery wants to hear from tutors interesting in staging classes as it bids to further expand the courses it offers to the public.

Bosses at The Willow Gallery in Oswestry have just announced its latest courses for 2014 but say they also want to hear from teachers interested in running workshops, courses and classes in the new year.

Tereska Shepherd from the venue said: "We are particularly looking for weekly or fortnightly art classes and Saturday or weekend workshops including pottery, enamelling, book binding, jewellery making and textiles as well as music classes, dance classes, meditation and pilates."

Tutors and teachers interested in setting up classes are asked to contact the gallery by January 8.

Among the courses already arranged is an "express yourself painting oil" course and weekly flower painting classes.

Thanks to store

THE CHUMS Befriending Service in Oswestry has thanked the town's Sainsbury's store for providing a delicious ending for its Christmas lunch. The store donated a Christmas cake for the celebration at Qube for volunteers and clients.

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(L-R) Fiona Phillips with Timothy Morris, Carolyn Farmer and Amanda Morris

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Having studied at Stirling University, the leading authority on dementia research, Amanda has made it her mission to utilise a pioneering new approach to interior design at Cedar Court, a new specialist care home in Audlem by quality care providers, Morris Care.

Commended by journalist, broadcaster and campaigner for dementia care, Fiona Phillips, the home combines specialist layouts with an appreciation for the challenges of caring.



As described by Amanda: "We know design has such a positive effect for people living with dementia and this, matched by the staff's commitment to providing high quality care, really does make Cedar Court a unique place to be. Residents can come and go as they please, spend time with our carers or make a cup of tea with others.

"The home provides specialist visual and sensory aspects including non-reflective glass, memory rooms and colour-coded doors throughout the home, to help those living with dementia feel safe and secure in their home. This is then coupled by an evolutionary approach to caring, which is headed by our Home Manager, Carolyn Farmer.

"Residents are helped to feel reassured in their own environment and encouraged to decide their own daily routines as they would in their own homes."

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CARING

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Eat drink and be merry but don't overdo celebrations**Advertisement feature**

A PUB landlord and pharmacy worker in Shropshire is warning people not to over-indulge over the new year period and prevent unnecessary trips to chemists for remedies.

The issue of eating and drinking responsibly is close to Hayley Jeneson's heart as she works as a technician at The Pharmacy @ Caxton in Oswestry and owns a pub in Shrewsbury.

Mrs Jeneson, whose husband Andrew is licensee of the Four Crosses in Bicton, said: "It is vital that people don't over-eat or drink too much at any time of the year to help ensure they keep as healthy as possible. "However, over the festive period there are so many more temptations."

Salad

She said: "At our pub we have actually got a salad bar, which is something a lot of restaurants don't have. It is free with any main meal.

"We always aim to have healthy options on the menu and everything is homemade, we don't buy anything in."

She said: "It is very important to try and encourage people to cut down on their alcohol intake and eat healthily as well. The festive period is a busy time for the pharmacy with people who have eaten or drunk too much coming in to buy indigestion or hangover remedies.

"If people took heed of the warnings and were sensible about their food and alcohol intake then they would have a much more enjoyable time without the negative after-effects."

Mrs Jeneson has been working at the pharmacy for 18 months and moved to Shropshire from Hertfordshire nearly seven years ago. She added: "We do regular staff training



Caxton Pharmacy offers advice on eating and drinking carefully.

to make sure staff check people's IDs when they come into the pub and recognise when people have had too much to drink. At the pharmacy we would much prefer people to think carefully about their food and drink intake and be responsible for their actions to prevent an unnecessary trip to the chemist."

The Pharmacy @ Caxton offers a free delivery service and can collect your prescription from any surgery in the Oswestry area and deliver to your home free of charge.

The pharmacy is open Monday to Friday 8.30am to 6pm and 8.30am to noon on a Saturday.

Anybody wanting health advice can call the pharmacy on (01691) 653033 or visit www.caxtonpharmacy.co.uk

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CARING

01691 668094

Beautiful setting for retired people

Advertisement feature

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The well maintained house has well proportioned rooms and retains most of its original Victorian features. It is located in a good residential position within the town.

It offers views across the long mountain and surrounding area, and is set in attractive gardens.

Ty Dorothy Hughes House is managed by a group of dedicated trustees and committee members, and is run by a housekeeper and her staff. The house offers seven well-appointed bedrooms, all with modern en-suite facilities. A stairlift is provided.

Modern

Our residents enjoy the use of the heated modern conservatory. Morning coffee is served daily and ingredients are provided for residents to make their own breakfast. Home cooked meals of an excellent standard are served for lunch and high tea, which residents enjoy in the comfort of our beautiful dining room.

Our aim is to provide residents with a secure, relaxed and homely environment in which their wellbeing and comfort is of prime importance. The house is an ideal place for those who may be lonely or may be finding it difficult to cope on their own at home.



Ty Dorothy Hughes House offers a comfortable, caring home.

It is intended for independent living and we do not offer nursing care, but can (in certain circumstances), work in with social services if basic care is required.

Friends and family are welcome to visit when they wish and to also attend functions held at the house.

Residents are free to come and go, but our committee also arranges visits and events throughout the year, which are much enjoyed.

Ty Dorothy Hughes House provides a wonderful home in a most caring environment, and at very competitive rates.

For more details call (01938) 556084, e-mail contact@dorothyhugheshouse.org or visit www.dorothyhugheshouse.org

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Oldbury Grange Nursing Home

Oldbury, Bridgnorth, Shropshire, WV16 5LW

01746 768586



Isle Court Nursing Home

Isle Lane, Bicton, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY3 8DY

01743 851600



Radbrook Nursing Home

Stanhill Road, Off Bank Farm Rd, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY3 6AL

01743 237800



Corbrook Court Nursing Home

Audlem, Cheshire, CW3 0HF Market Drayton 8 miles.

01270 812049



Stretton Hall Nursing Home

Shrewsbury Road, All Stretton, Shropshire, SY6 6HG

01694 725320



Wellington Court Nursing Home

Holyhead Road, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire, TF1 2EH

01952 245521



Wrekin Court Nursing Home

Holyhead Road, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire, TF1 2EH

01952 245521



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- Plas Ffynnon Surgery
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Our new Rimmel of London I-Bar has just been installed ready for Christmas. To celebrate we are giving 20% off all our Rimmel.



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Your Local Family
Dental Practice



KEEPING OSWESTRY ALIVE

OSWESTRY & BORDER
CHRONICLE

Thank you to all our readers and advertisers who have supported the Oswestry & Border Chronicle Keeping Oswestry Alive Campaign. Launched in August 2013 the Oswestry Chronicle launched the campaign to provide a network of life saving defibrillators located in strategic areas across Oswestry.



Over 75,000 people die each year in the UK from sudden cardiac arrest but, with a rapid treatment from a defibrillator around 85% could be saved.



Please check the Oswestry Chronicle and our Facebook and Twitter pages for details of our campaign during 2014.

If you have any fundraising ideas please call our office on

01691 668090

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Are you over weight?
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"Weigh day this morning and I have lost 2 pounds, in fact more like 2.5 pounds which makes it "this" 7 stone off! So pleased".

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01686 650632

I also specialize in helping people overcome anxiety, depression, fears, low self confidence and lack of motivation.



MAJOR EXTENSIONS 10% DISCOUNT VOUCHER

This voucher is for 10% discount to be used in major extensions salon against clip-in or weaved-in hair extensions booked in the month of January 2014.

Voucher must be produced in salon.

Telephone: 07792 828558

E-mail: majorextensions@hotmail.co.uk

Facebook: [majorextensions](https://www.facebook.com/majorextensions)

Stacey Laundry Website:
www.majorextensions.co.uk

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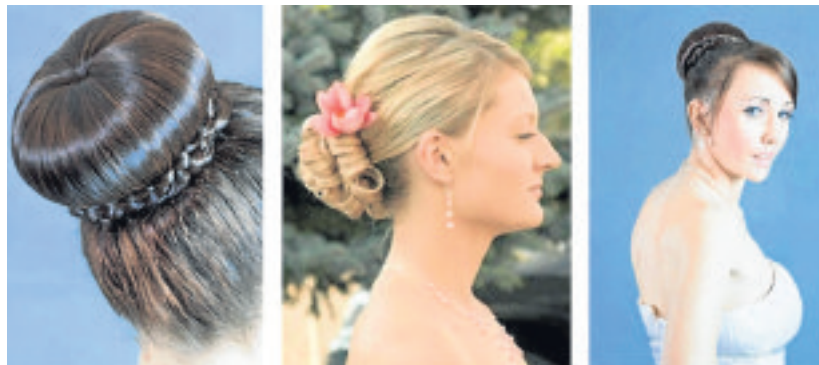
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MNA Media

NEW YEAR, NEW YOU

Discounts on offer to salon customers



Pictured are examples of some of the hair packages available from Major Extensions in Oswestry.

AFTER having a wonderful Christmas in their new salon in Oswestry staff at Major Extensions are now offering **discount vouchers to customers during the month of January.**

After offering thanks to all new and loyal customers that have supported them in the transition to the new salon at 2a Oswald Road there's a range of discount vouchers available throughout this month.

Major Extensions can now meet

Advertisement feature

your every need for that change to your appearance, whether it be your hair swept up inside a classic bun, a wig to change your whole appearance or extending your own hair to give you the long and voluptuous hair you have always wanted.

Service

Major Extensions is offering a half pack service which other salons don't, enabling you to keep the price of your extensions much more affordable. Staff

can style and curl your hair for that special occasion.

They can make and fit clip-in extensions, giving you the flexibility of volume and length to your own hair for that special occasion.

They are now offering a very affordable priced hair extension weft to the range to make it much more affordable for the first time weaved-in extension or reasonably priced set of clip-ins - a must for all hair extension first timers.

As always, the salon provides free consultations and after care advice for customers.

New Simple Start Only at Weight Watchers

Your local meetings

*NEW MEETING OPENS 6TH JANUARY

Welshpool Corn Exchange

MONDAY 5.00pm*
THURSDAY 12 noon

Eastern Community Centre

WEDNESDAY 6.30pm

Oswestry Parish Centre

WEDNESDAY 10.00am, 12 noon

The Oswestrian

WEDNESDAY 5.30pm

Montgomery Activity Centre

FRIDAY 5.00pm

Contact Carol: 07989 196350 for more details

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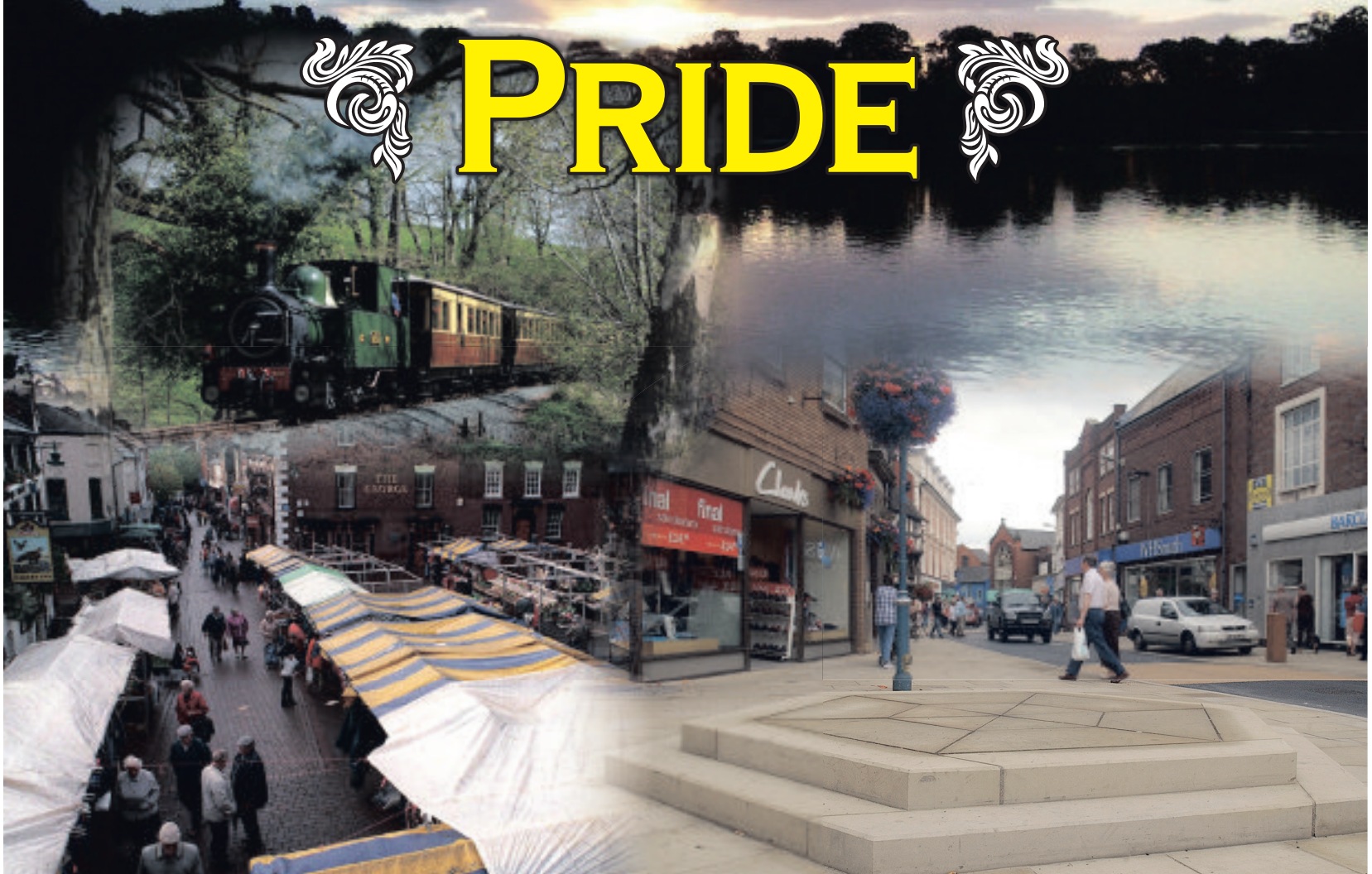


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BORDER

PRIDE



BORDER PRIDE

Motorsport experts work to the highest standards



Inside the workshops at Davies Motorsport Services in Welshpool.

FORMED in 2009, Davies Motorsport Services specialises in the running of cars in all forms of motorsport, whether circuit or rally stage based.

It has extensive experience, ranging from the FIA World Championship to club level motorsport.

DMS was started by a local guy, Andy Davies, who was leading technician with the Subaru World Rally Team, for former World Champion, Petter Solberg.

So DMS really has the very highest standard of work. In 2013 DMS is running Tom Cave, a Mid Wales lad, in the MSA British Rally Championship, who is currently lying third overall at the mid point of the season.

In the past few years, DMS has managed to achieve a number of notable results, ranging from overall BTRDA production cup champions, British Fiesta Sport Trophy Champions, Subaru Cup champions.

They finished second and third overall in the 2012 British Rally Championship – the pinnacle of rallying in the

UK. In addition to motorsport, DMS now offer's a full range of road car services, it has latest vehicle diagnostic equipment as well as offering servicing and repairs, clutches cambelts and all other work.

It can also supply a full range of vehicle upgrades, from suspension and brake kits to exhausts and high performance fluids. It offers a competitive and friendly service so call in at Henfaes Lane for a quote anytime.

DMS is currently quoting for the 2014 season, contact Andy for further details on 01938 554 545 or e-mail info@daviesmotorsport.org.uk

Big changes at Black Country Metal Works



Black Country Metal Words Ltd is looking forward to 2014 after a year of monumental change.

2013 was a year of monumental change for Black Country Metal Works Ltd in Oswestry.

The business, based at the British Ironworks Centre, looks forward to forging stronger links with the community in 2014.

A spokesman for the firm said: "This year has seen some incredible changes, not simply the usual obsessions with increased sales, or lowering costs, but the birth of a more commu-

nity conscious awareness, a realisation that we can run our business hand in hand with sustainable good works, by involving our business and staff in deeds that include helping our community or indeed our nation.

Enrich

"This brings a realisation that we aren't sacrificing our business ambitions or progress but rather managing to enrich both ideals simultaneously."

The spokesman added: "After expanding in this amazing first year, it has left us all believing that 2014 will bring about even greater success, not just for our business but for all those we endeavour to serve and assist in any small way we can.

"We look forward to welcoming 2014 with renewed hope, vigour and an unshakeable belief that in 2014 the best is yet to come."



MID WALES

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BORDER PRIDE

Firm pleased with success of new store on Trade Park



Lilly McKenzie, daughter of owners Anita and Craig McKenzie, in the showroom.

SHROPSHIRE Carpets are extremely pleased with the success of their new store which opened in early July, located on Oswestry Trade Park, stocking the same fantastic products as their Shrewsbury store based at Arrowpoint Retail Park.

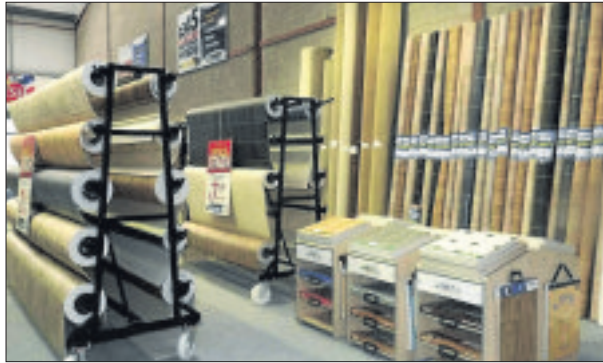
The team strongly believe they have a lot to offer to Oswestry and the surrounding area. In addition to their outstanding prices, extensive products in stock within the store, luxurious items available to order and excellent customer service skills, they also offer estimating and fitting services.

Valued customers can be assured their orders are completed in a non-pressured selling environment, where they are able to browse freely and ask any questions required to establish their requirements are fully met.

In addition, there are no hidden delivery costs and surcharges, so any quotation will be very precise, and clearly understood.

Shropshire Carpets is a family run, independent retailer. Excellent customer service is their priority, and by building good customer relationships, individuals' needs and budgets are quickly established and respected.

Their efforts are being rewarded with a high level of repeat business via recommendations, and fantastic testimonials from very satisfied customers.



A selection of carpets on display at Shropshire Carpets in Oswestry.

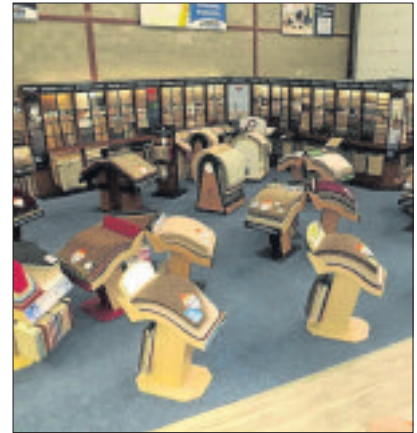
The team has extensive experience and product knowledge of the latest trends and colours.

Flooring starts from just £4.99 sq/m, with extensive ranges of 100% wool, wool mixes and bleach-cleanable carpets in multi-width sizes, remnants, rollstock, vinyls, and underlays.

Shropshire Carpets is the ideal independent retailer to supply quality products to complement your home or work environment.

They offer an estimating service, no surcharges and their own fitting teams, leaving valued customers with the knowledge Shropshire Carpets offers a quality service with unbeatable prices.

Enquiries welcome on (01691) 659611.



Samples for customers to browse at Shropshire Carpets.



A wide selection of carpets is on offer.

• Laminates to clear from £7.99 m2

ALL TO CLEAR

Vinyls from £4.99 m2
30 rolls to choose from

• 200 room size remnants to clear from £50 - over 800 rolls to choose from

• British wool carpets from £8.99 m2

• Extensive choice of bleach cleanable carpets from £5.99 m2

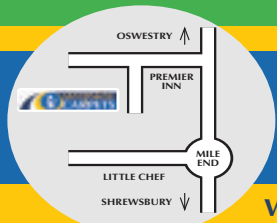
All fitted by our own local fitters



Starts 2nd January

with Mammoth Reductions

"At Shropshire Carpets if you can't find what you're looking for . . .
. . . . it doesn't exist!"



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Open: Mon-Sat 9 am-6 pm Sun 10 am-4 pm
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WWW.SHROPSHIRECARPETS.CO.UK



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BORDER PRIDE

Wide range on offer at Saxon Homecare



Saxon Homecare at Geldrid.

SAXON Homecare offers a wide range of stoves, fireplaces and cookers from its headquarters on the Geldrid Industrial Park, near Chirk.

Saxon was established in 1980 at Chirk and eight years later moved to Geldrid and had a 6,000 sq ft showroom built in 2001.

January 2002 saw the new Saxon showroom opened by Owen Paterson, MP, and it now has more than 120 woodburning, multi-fuel and gas stoves, 40 fireplaces and 20 range cookers on display.

Many are installed into working flues to give live demonstrations to

customers. Saxon stocks a huge range of stove and fireplace accessories in store including coal buckets, fire guards, companion sets, ecofans, stove servicing and cleaning products including replacement fire rope and glue as well as replacement stove glass and much more.

In Saxon's dedicated range cooker area a large selection is displayed in all the fuel types, oil, gas and solid fuel. Manufactures include, Aga, Britannia, Esse, Rayburn, Redfire, Stanley and Wamsler.

More than 50 fireplaces are displayed from main fireplace suppliers

Caterhams, Gallery, Minsterstone and the Penman Collection made in a variety of materials and designs.

Minsterstone and Caterhams offer made to measure fireplaces in a number of different finishes so there is always a fireplace suitable for you.

Saxon currently supplies and displays five different manufactures of gas fires and three manufactures of electric fires.

Also available is a huge range of wood burning and multi-fuel stoves from various manufactures including Charnwood, Esse, Euroheat and Saxon Flame Stoves.

Celebrating 20 years and looking to the future



The new driving range at Mile End Golf Club.

HAVING farmed on the outskirts of Oswestry since 1956 the Thompson family started diversification of some of their land into a golfing venue in the early 1990s.

From the beginnings as a 12-bay driving range a full length nine-hole golf course was developed and opened on June 6, 1992. Due to the success of this a further nine holes was completed in early 1995 and the full 18-hole course opened on May 18, 1996 by which time a modern clubhouse to fulfil all golfers' requirements was also available. The golf course offers challenges for golfers of all abilities and

over recent years improvements to drainage means the golf course copes well with inclement weather.

The development of Shropshire's only two-tier driving range along with an indoor custom club-fitting and tuition room means Mile End is now recognised as the area's most complete golfing centre. The driving range not only allows experienced golfers to improve their skills but also attracts many newcomers who wish to try out the game for the first time.

Professional golf tuition is available from PGA qualified staff James Davies and Grant Edwards who have forged links with many local schools and colleges to encourage the golfers of the future. Mile End has benefitted from

the forward-thinking relationship built between members and proprietors which has proved successful in developing a club for the modern golfer.

At Mile End we are fully aware of the need to respond to the change in golfers' budgets and lifestyles and work hard to make sure the club offers memberships to suit individual requirements whilst at the same time maintaining the high quality facilities.

Our in-house head chef Andy Biggar is keen to promote the fact that you don't have to be a club member to enjoy his superb home-made dishes.

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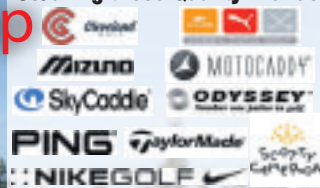
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01691 671246

VOUCHER

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Free basket of balls & free club hire* if required

Valid until March 31st 2014



BORDER PRIDE

Opportunity is found in every project for business

AS WELL as adding striking buildings and energy efficient new homes to our towns and villages, S J Roberts Construction takes every project as an opportunity to educate, inform and maybe even light a spark in the next generation of designers, developers and building trade specialists.

Because renovations, extensions and new builds are an almost ongoing part of life in most communities, ensuring awareness of both safety and the skills involved in the work is a must for the firm, which carries out many of its commissions across Shropshire and Wales.

No opportunity is missed for site managers and the company health and safety officer to highlight building site risk awareness to school pupils and this comes with an invitation to them to take a closer look at development sites in their area with a visit, discovering how they work and the skills they demand, as well as the benefits they deliver to communities.

And S J Roberts Construction extends the learning opportunities beyond schools into apprenticeships in management, bricklaying and carpentry, creating the professionals and craftspeople the industry will need in the future.

What they all learn, apprentices and pupils

alike, is about construction with a conscience – understanding that regular contact with community members impacted in any way by development work is crucial, be it through the mail shots, coffee mornings and noticeboard updates that S J Roberts Construction puts at the heart of every project



Development Coordinator Phil Hoskins at the launch of 45 affordable houses at Red Bank in Welshpool.

where it touches on the lives of nearby residents. This community-oriented approach to its work is just one of the reasons why S J Roberts Construction builds long-lasting relationships with its client base and is welcomed into neighbourhoods as a partner in developing for the future.

You can see items in your own home before buying



Kit out your nursery at Shannon Sales.

IF YOU'VE never been to Shannon Sales, it's well worth a visit.

We are an established, over 40 years, furniture and carpet store, situated in the pretty village of Chirk. The showroom is set in a Victorian school.

The business was started in 1970 by a local couple, Sonny and Ann Jones, and is now run by their daughter assisted by a very helpful and capable team of staff. Debbie and Cindy are on hand to give you any help you require with making your purchases.

We are happy to lend out both fabric and carpet samples so you can make your choice in your own home. We also happily lend out mirrors, pictures, lamps, coffee tables, nests, even small chests of drawers so you can see them in situ, and thus reducing the chances of buying a white elephant!

Fred, Mark and Colin have a combined experience with the company of at least 40 years.

When fitting your carpet, they will empty your room, take your old carpet up and dispose of it, trim any doors

that need trimming, and then replace your furniture back on to your new carpet. One thing to remember though is they'll never say no to a cup of tea!

We have an extensive range of carpets from hardwearing, stain resistant Berbers to the best quality Axminsters and Wiltons. Three seaters, two seaters, sofa beds, chairs, recliners, swivel chairs and a large selection of electric lift/rise recliners, we will even bring a couple of lift/rise reclining chairs out to your home for you to try if you are unable to visit the shop.

Working with the local community



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tel: 01743 891858
www.sjroberts.com

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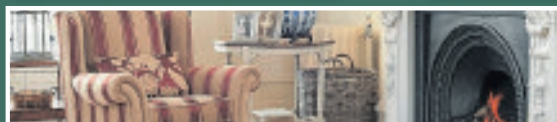
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BORDER PRIDE

Expression of wishes forms make it easier for families

FOR Four Crosses and Welshpool-based Aubrey Kirkham Funeral Directors, the pledge to deliver a "Superior Standard of Service" to the bereaved and their families isn't an idle claim, and is a promise that carries added significance over the New Year period.

The holidays are an extremely difficult time for grieving families and friends, which is why Aubrey and the team are reminding individuals across the region about their Expression of Wishes form.

This provides local people with the opportunity to note things that they would like and which would be important to them, and so help their families arrange the perfect ceremony in the future.

"Discussing funerals is difficult at any time" explained Aubrey Kirkham. "And sadly, we have often seen the challenges and heartache faced by families when they are unsure of what their loved one would have wanted. At such a tough time anyway, having to second-guess such important decisions can cause real stress and even disagreements across the wider family."

The Expression of Wishes form is available to download free of charge, from the Aubrey Kirkham Funeral Directors website www.aubreykirkhamfuneraldirector.co.uk, and is simple to complete, and enabling individuals to indicate their preferences across all areas, and ensure that funeral arrangements are as straight forward as possible.

"We've had some really positive feedback about the form, and how it has helped broach a difficult subject with sensitivity. There is obviously no right time to plan a funeral,



Aubrey Kirkham and Leanne Garvey.

but the form aims to provide a little reassurance, and provide families with the comfort that they have fulfilled their loved-ones wishes when the time come."

The form can be returned to Aubrey Kirkham Funeral Directors for safe-keeping, or can be stored with other important documents. For further details, call Welshpool (01938) 555099, or the funeral home in Four Crosses on (01691) 839292. Visit www.aubreykirkhamfuneraldirector.co.uk

Jaunts afloat thanks to 'Jones The Boats'



Jones the Boats on the canal near Pontcysyllte Aqueduct,

FROM a wharf near the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, Jones The Boats runs a variety of narrowboat trips, from a 45-minute return trip across the Aqueduct to a six-hour round trip to the Lion Quays.

As you drift serenely along the canal at walking pace, you can enjoy fine cuisine with the spectacular backdrop of North Wales' magnificent scenery.

Meals on board are available for groups of over 10 on the longer trips, while a tea and coffee bar is always open with a live commentary bringing the history of famous area to life.

Onshore facilities include a cafe, toilets, a car park and a picnic area and new features include two-course Sunday lunches at £19 for a two-hour trip.

These have been well supported by couples and small parties.

Booking is essential for these popular trips, which depart every Sunday at 12.30pm.

Schedule

Public trips run daily from Easter to October at noon, 1pm, 2pm and 3pm but those travelling long distances should always check that trips are running to schedule to avoid disappointment.

Fares for the 45-minute trips are £5

for adults and £3 for children, with family tickets available at £14.

The narrowboat Eirlys has been a regular sight on the Llangollen canal for three decades.

Brightly decorated in the traditional canalboat style, Eirlys can seat over 50 passengers in comfort – ideal for large coach parties.

Peter Jones has a long history of narrowboating. He has been navigating on the Llangollen Canal for almost 30 years, so you know you are in capable hands on a trip in his restaurant boat Eirlys.

Contact the team at www.canaltrip.co.uk or call (01978) 824166 at The Old Wharf, Trevor.

Aubrey Kirkham

Funeral Directors



Aubrey



Andy



Ann



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BORDER PRIDE

Family is still in driving seat at car repair firm



Robin and Ann Hitch of Fix Auto Oswestry with son and company managing director Lee Hitch, left.

THERE can't be many family owned companies on the Welsh borders that can genuinely boast of being in business for four decades, but that's exactly the case at Fix Auto Oswestry.

The Hitch family continue to be at the helm of what was formerly Pant Motor Bodies prior to joining the UK's fastest growing network of car repairers and hoisting the Fix Auto UK flag above their workshops in Canal Side, Llanymynech.

The business was started by Robin Hitch in May, 1973, out of a single shed-like workshop in the nearby village of Pant, hence the company's original name.

Having served his apprenticeship back in his native Walsall in the West Midlands, it was the love of Llanymynech girl, Ann, who became his wife, that brought him to the area.

Today, the repair business covers more than 22,000 sq feet, employs 24 highly skilled craftsmen, is BSI Kitemark (PAS 125) approved and is an officially approved repairer for several

car manufacturers including Peugeot, Citroen, Honda, Renault, Vauxhall and the entire VW Group encompassing VW, Audi, Skoda and SEAT.

Robin explained: "For as long as I can remember I always wanted to be my own boss. Shortly after moving into the area I set about my goal and literally became a one-man band."

Though the 68-year-old is now opting to step back from the day-to-day running of the business, the Hitch name is still firmly in the driving seat as he's handed the controls to son, Lee.

Poet Brian offers help with finding right words

IF YOU are looking for a touching or meaningful poem for that special occasion an Oswestry man may have the answer.

Brian Stone takes commissions for personal poems covering a wide range of subjects and sentiments, often weaving unusual aspects skilfully around deeply felt feelings and messages.

For many years Brian has written scripts, short speeches and prose. Poetry came to the fore with the passing of his beloved wife Christine when his grief manifested itself through his ability as a poet.

The result was a torrent of heart felt feelings woven into a touching fabric of verse.

Many readers of his book, *My Journey Through Grief*, have shed tears over the content while his poetry has now moved on to encompass humour, satire, messaging and children's poetry.

Bands

A percussion teacher, Brian began playing drums age the age of 13. He worked in West End nightclubs before joining bands on ocean liners.

On his marriage Brian moved to Stoke in 1972, playing in a resident band before taking to the stage at Tiffanys in Shrewsbury.

His studies took him to Trinity College of Music in London, studying orchestral percussion with Michael Skinner, principal percussionist at Covent Garden Opera House, Andrew Smith of Philharmonia and Michael Baker of Royal RPO.

After moving into teaching fulltime he formed Britain's first drum kit and percussion exam syllabus for the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London.

He has remained an examiner for the Guildhall for 17



Brian Stone from Oswestry with one of his poem books.

years and for the LCM for nine years. In 1988 he began seven years with the Shropshire Music Service and instigated the Shropshire Schools Percussion Ensemble, gaining qualified teacher status.

Brian has appeared at Theatre Clwyd on over 80 occasions and now plays in several bands and orchestras as well as conducting nine percussion ensembles.

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TIPS OF THE WEEK

Carl Taphouse Carpets

Carl Taphouse Carpets is a Family run business with over 70 years' experience within the carpet retail industry, established in 1980 by Alf and Marjorie Taphouse. From the beginning Taphouse Carpets objective was to provide value for money combined with genuine customer satisfaction, this is still at the forefront of their agenda.

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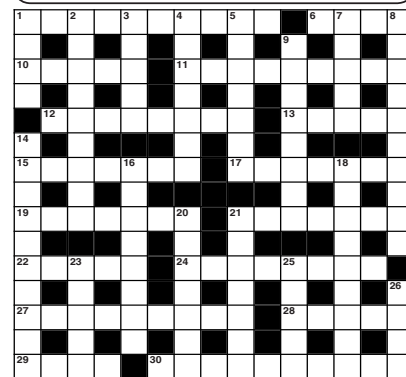
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Compiled by Roger F. Squires

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- 10 Where the goat goes without corn (5)
- 11 Duty-free state (9)
- 12 Means to examine the money (8)
- 13 Looks intently at lords (5)
- 15 Model, formerly fat? (7)
- 17 Sailor held by a devout Buddhist state (7)
- 19 A craft designed to beat the freeze (7)
- 21 He has an exacting role in Shakespeare (7)
- 22 Spoke in the plural? (5)
- 24 To reverse excessively in a dance is silly (8)
- 27 Man target for a scolding woman (9)
- 28 Loyal subject in a European city (5)
- 29 Conventional fare? (4)
- 30 Deny cast is upset by commercial associations (10)

DOWN

- 1 Take steps to help with training (4)
- 2 About the proving of a will he's shameless (9)
- 3 Hands joined together (5)
- 4 It may appear to frighten people (7)
- 5 Prospect following land clearance (4,3)
- 7 Come about a wage increase (5)
- 8 Old nickname for a person of high standing (10)
- 9 Strangely happy in Eastern religious feast (8)
- 14 Not praised, but need it drag out like this? (10)
- 16 Spendthrift pair involved with gold (8)
- 18 Its absence is plain to see (9)
- 20 Slight quarrel over some gauzy fabric (7)
- 21 Given marks for having been observant (7)
- 23 An air of sadness (5)
- 25 Flower I ring up about (5)
- 26 Rigid forms of worship (4)

LAST WEEKS RESULTS

Across: 1 Umpire, 4 Swelling, 9 Denise, 10 Take away, 12 Roll, 13 Proof, 14 Free, 17 Apprehensive, 20 Pair of gloves, 23 Eels, 24 Smear, 25 Proa, 28 Examinee, 29 Pleads, 30 Travesty, 31 Reason.
Down: 1 Underlay, 2 Penelope, 3 Ruse, 5 Weapons of war, 6 Lied, 7 Inward, 8 Geyser, 11 Free from debt, 15 Relay, 16 Evils, 18 Overlaps, 19 Assassin, 21 Relent, 22 Alpaca, 26 Live, 27 Blue.

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ShropshireWalks

6 pages of maps, routes and ideas for exploring the county and its borders



Walks

Stately to sedate: Welshpool with Julie Bromilow-Nicklen



The stunning Powis Castle and its gardens, viewed from the air

Short walk tickles all of the senses

This short walk begins and ends in Welshpool, through Powis Castle grounds and returns along the Montgomery canal tow-path.

Everyone loved Thursdays when I worked at The Orchard School in Middletown, because Thursdays were barge days. With baguettes from the butchers and Welshpool bakery jam doughnuts, we'd board a Heulwen (Sunshine) Trust narrow boat at Welshpool wharf and drift up and down Montgomery canal. Twenty years later the Heulwen Trust still provide watery respite for special young people.

I thought about barge Thursdays last winter when I was walking the Offas Dyke Way, part of which runs along the canal. On that day the Severn Valley was in a deep, silent, quaking freeze. Crimson rose-hips were frost fringed and ducks nibbled back the ice. Alone on the towpath I watched yellow lorry lamps gloaming through the frozen stalks and fields and ghost-white fog on the A548 and felt extremely peaceful.

The National Trust own Powis Castle and welcome members and paying visitors to the house and gardens.

They also allow public access to the grounds if you stick to the paths; enter through the castle gates just off Welshpool High Street. The nearby cars and shops are soon forgotten in such a quiet landscape; a grand and sculpted landscape, of ancient trees and grassland, and gleaming silver water.

Grazing

I was sat with a sandwich by the dairy pond watching ducks and coots dabble the water lilies, when I became aware of animals behind me and turned to see a dozen red deer grazing the castle slopes and pulling at lower branches. I'd hoped to see them, knew they were there, as deer often are in country parks, yet was still enchanted as they moved with grace, antlers swaying, ears flicking, watching me.

It felt like an ancient scene and not just because of the medieval castle grounds – it was like looking at a Neolithic cave painting.

Take the path in front of the castle gardens, cross the lane to follow the way-marked track over the field, down over the stone bridge and more fields to arrive at Belan Locks through an avenue of ancient oaks. Cross the canal-bridge and turn right under it, the towpath takes you back to Welshpool but don't hurry – this part of Montgomery canal, barely used, is rich in wildlife.

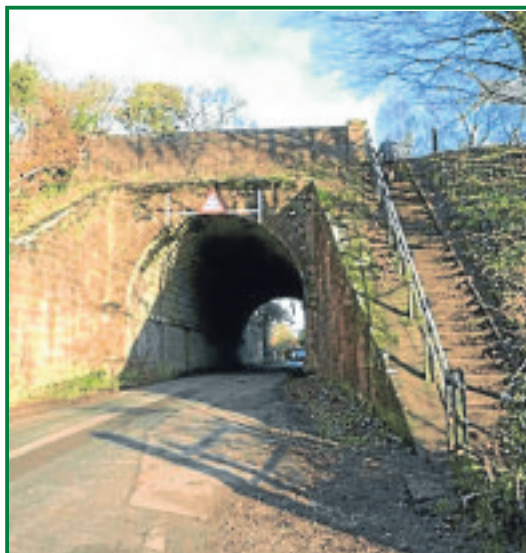
At Belan Locks the water is dark and clear like a mirror beneath yellow lilies and duckweed, and the banks a jungle of reeds, columbine and water-mint.

Returning along the towpath I watch roach swim, gold finches feed on thistles and whirrig beetles spin like ball bearings on the water beyond the bur-reeds and umbelliferous tangle of angelica, meadowsweet and drop-wort.

The last half mile is less peaceful with the noisy A480 just over the water but it doesn't matter; if you're anything like me you'll be thinking about jam doughnuts by now.



Belan Locks, on the Montgomery Canal near Welshpool



Up and over – Market Drayton's mini-aqueduct



Tyrley Cut, on the Shropshire Union Canal, near Market Drayton

Work up an appetite then enjoy a feast

Market Drayton

DISTANCE: 5.25 miles (8.4km)

TIME: 2 hours

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: ★★☆☆

PARKING: Car park on Towers Lawn, next to bus station

1 Take a walk and enjoy a veritable feast of gingerbread men and Cheshire cheese at Drayton's Wednesday market, which has flourished here since 1245. These days Drayton markets itself to food lovers with a host of specialist shops. It is also the 'home of gingerbread'. First made here in 1817, there were once four gingerbread dynasties in the town, each with its own secret recipe. To work up an appetite, first walk past the bus station, cross at the zebra crossing, then turn left down Queen Street to the Buttercross and left on Stafford Street. Go straight on at the first junction, right at the next on to Great Hales Street then left on Berrisford Road (use the easily missed footway on the left until forced to join the road).

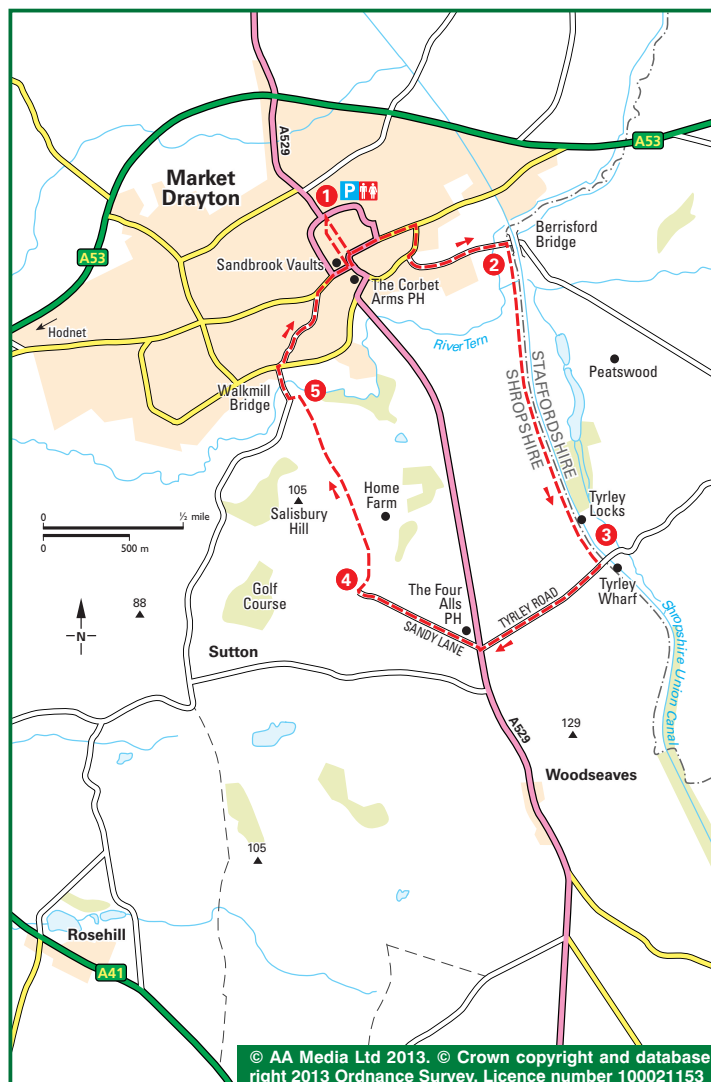
2 You'll soon come to Berrisford Bridge, also known as 40 Steps Aqueduct, which carries the Shropshire Union Canal over the road. Go up the steps and turn right on the tow path. This part of the Shropshire system was originally the Birmingham and Liverpool Junction Canal, which went from Autherley to Nantwich. The engineer was Thomas Telford and the boldness of his design is apparent along this stretch, with its massive cuttings and embankments. The deep cutting on the approach to Tyrley Locks has its own microclimate, and positively drips with ferns, mosses and liverworts. The tow path marks the county boundary.

3 At bridge 60 by Tyrley Wharf go up to the lane (Tyrley Road) and turn right. This leads to the main road (A529) and a pub called The Four Alls. Cross with care to Sandy Lane. After 600yds (549m) a footpath leaves the lane on the left. Continue along the lane.

4 Sandy Lane comes to a T-junction with a track. Turn right here; it's still Sandy Lane, but this part is a private road and dogs must be kept on a lead. It heads north towards Drayton, overlooked by Salisbury Hill, where a Yorkist army under the Earl of Salisbury camped in 1459 before defeating a Lancastrian force twice the size.

5 When you meet a road, turn right to cross the River Tern at Walkmill Bridge (a packhorse bridge). Cross a wider road and go up Kilbank Road opposite. Where it ends turn right. After passing Sandbrook Vaults, turn left past the Buttercross to Cheshire Street, which leads back to Towers Lawn.

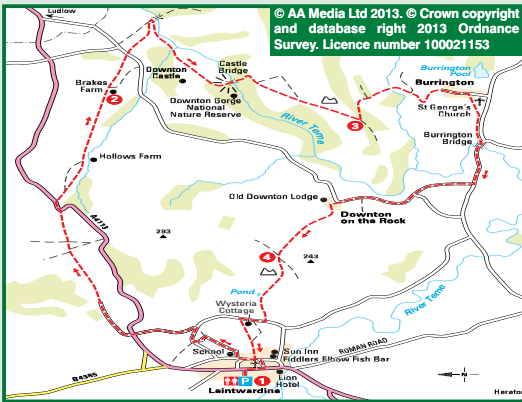
● Courtesy of the AA's Shropshire Walks In A Box series. <http://shop.theaa.com/store/walking>



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Walks

Downton on the Rock



DISTANCE: 10 miles (16.1km)

TIME: Minimum five hrs

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: ★★★

HIGHLIGHTS: Tough walking in a landscape on the Shropshire border which is pleasing to the eye.

Tough trek but it is easy on the eye

1 Begin downhill, taking the first left, Church Street. Turn left. As you reach the primary school, turn right. Aim for a brick-built, brown and white house but, after a two-plank footbridge, go left to a tarmac road. Turn right. In 300 yards (274m) turn left, to the A4113. Cross, turning immediately right up a lane. Ascend for a mile (1.6km). Soon after a skew junction go forward, taking the left of two gates. Just beyond a shelter, take a stile right. Go three quarters left, across two fields, to woodland. At the A4113 turn left but soon right, beside a wire fence. At the end follow the field edge round left for 40 yards (37m). Go down an earthy bank in trees to pass stables right, then along a dirt road, soon straight for 0.5 mile (800m) to Brakes Farm.

2 Go ahead (waymarker). Cross a minor road diagonally, then cross fields to a minor lane beside houses numbers 20 and 19. Turn left. Soon turn right, downhill. Turn right, along the river, just before a bridge over the River Teme. Skirt two unnamed houses. Up a bank, join a dirt road. Follow this to Castle Bridge. Ascend but within 110 yds (100m) of leaving woodland go half right, across a field, rejoining the dirt road into forest for 60 yds (55m). Scramble up a bank (waymarker). Traverse the steep meadow to a gate in the top, among oaks. Keep this line to go down a wide meadow, locating a stile on the left into harvested trees.

3 Turn left and descend. At meadow, curve round a dry valley. At a left bend turn right through a gate. Go left of a specimen oak to a hidden stile in the bottom corner. Cross a footbridge and turn right. Cross meadow to a gate, and soon reach a minor road. Turn right. Descend through Burrington, to St George's Church. Behind the church, cross meadows to Burrington Bridge. Cross the River Teme. After 650 yds (594m) take the right turn. At Downton, head towards Old Downton Lodge, but then turn left. Beyond a wall take the gate on the right (waymarker), along an old lane. Shortly move right to ascend a right-hand field edge, soon following a beech-lined avenue to a junction with a dirt track.

4 Over a stile into a field, swing left to descend. Past a (possibly dry) pond veer left along a right-hand field-edge to a road. Turn right. Within 275 yds (251m), at Wysteria Cottage, take a kissing gate. Cross three fields to emerge on Watling Street. Turn right to Church Street and the start.

Walking the boundary hints of bloody battles



Crossing a stile on Offa's Dyke

Offa's Dyke

by Julie Bromilow-Nicklen



Over the last year I have, little by little, walked 1,027 miles around the edge of Wales.

This was mostly via the new Wales Coast Path but my journey included the Offa's Dyke Path which connects Prestatyn in the north with Chepstow in the south, weaving in and out of Shropshire in the middle.

I left Prestatyn on a blue November day. There were mince pies in the bakers and ropes of bryony berries tangled with wild raspberry and gorse on the hills.

Enough leaves lingered for the Clwydian hills to seem knitted; a rich textured woolly landscape. But it was winter; I soon ran out of light and biscuits and it wasn't till May that I arrived sodden in Chepstow, when evening sea light was fresh after a day of rain and wind howling over the Devil's Pulpit in the limestone cliffs of the Wye Valley.

Frontier

The border between Wales and England has changed often, as borders do.

The dyke was built in the eighth century, but the mountain ranges at the edge of Wales provided a natural frontier long before then – they are studded with Bronze and Iron Age hill forts which made life difficult for invading Romans. King Offa built the dyke, to divide his kingdom of Mercia in England from the tribes in Wales, but history is vague on the details. We don't know whether the dyke was an armed frontier or more a symbol of intent.

We do know that after William conquered he rewarded his knights with parcels of land on which they built castles, around which sprang boroughs and churches. Many of these are along Offa's Dyke – Montgomery, Monmouth, Chirk, and many more were subsequently captured by Owain Glyndwr and his men in the 15th century. There are Welsh castles too, like Dinas Bran. We also know it was a huge earth construction and that much is still clearly visible, at its most towering point in the south or subtle



as a hedge bank in fields. The path runs through Shropshire in four places; from Bron-y-garth past Oswestry to Llanymynech, in the fields south of Welshpool, west of Bishop's Castle through Newcastle-on-Clun to Knighton, and the area around Knighton.

The walking was rich and varied. I'd never been to the deciduous Candy Woods by Oswestry racecourse – ghostly in mist and dripping trees the day I walked through; I ate bread and cheese on the stone seat where miners sat.

I had never been to Moelydd Hill, a lovely hill, a perfect hill in many ways, a simple climb with exhilarating blue views. But surprisingly what moved me most was not the breathtaking walks around Knighton and Knighton.

It was the fields south of Welshpool where the boundary wiggles and 'Welcome to Shropshire' signs greet you on tiny wooden bridges. These quiet fields were where some of the bloodiest battles were held between the Parliamentarians and Royalists over 400 years ago.

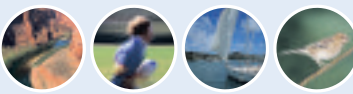
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Walks

Prees

DISTANCE: 10 miles

TIME: 3.5 hours

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: 3/5

HIGHLIGHTS: Whixall Moss, Ellesmere Canal, Shropshire Wildlife Trust nature reserve.



Whixall Moss is in a designated site of Special Scientific Interest

Route starts out from railway line

1 Start at Prees railway station. Join the bridgeway by the signal box. After a few paces you'll see a blocked stile, so use the gate instead. Enter a field and follow the right hand edge to a stile. Cross to the other side of the hedge, but continue in same direction. Straight on across four more fields to the B5476.

2 Go along the road opposite (signed Whixall) and keep ahead at two junctions. Turn right by Whixall Social Centre, then left onto a drive before Church Farm.

3 At Farthing Cottage, turn right. Cross a field, passing a pond, then continue across the next field. Go slightly left across a third field to a pair of stiles and a footbridge. Don't cross these, but go through a gate, left, opening into a large field. Turn left, keeping about 100 yards from its left hand edge. On reaching a row of three large oaks, go diagonally right to a gate, and then cross another field to a lane.

4 Turn right, then left, at a junction and straight on at the next. Join the first path on the right after Whixall School. Cross three fields to the Llangollen Canal and cross Roundtorn Bridge, then turn right to an information board telling you about the NNR. Take a leaflet from the box - it acts as a permit to enter the reserve. In a few paces, turn left, following the orange coded Mosses Trail.

5 At point 8 on the trail, turn left to meet the canal at Morris' Bridge. Turn right on the tow path to a canal junction, then cross Roving Bridge to join the Prees Branch. The tow path changes sides at Dobson's Bridge. Beyond Whixall Marina the canal is disused and has become a Shropshire Wildlife Trust nature reserve.

6 Meet a lane at Waterloo Bridge. Turn left, then immediately right, signposted Edgaston. Keep straight on past the Abbeygreen turning, but turn left when you come to a T-junction and follow the lane into Edgaston.

7 Just before the church, go through a gate on the left; a second gate then a stile into a field. Go straight across this to the B5476. Turn left, then cross to a lane. Follow it past Edgaston Hall and a couple of farms. Turn left, then cross to a lane. Follow it past Edgaston Hall and a couple of farms. Turn left on a bridleway (sign overgrown). In 300 metres bear right to a gate and continue to the railway. Follow it north, bearing slightly left to join a clear track which leads back to Prees station.

● *Courtesy of the AA's Shropshire Walks In A Box series.*
<http://shop.theaa.com/store/walking>



Prees railway station, the starting point of the walk



1. The main parking area, accessed from Bayston Hill; 2. The hilltop information board and viewing platform; 3. Spring Coppice; 4. Views towards the old Condover railway station, the Long Mynd and the A49. Map courtesy of Google

Visit the lowly hill with noble views

Lyth Hill

by Julie Bromilow-Nicklen



John Waddington-Feather came to our primary school and read from his book, Quills Adventures in the Great Beyond. He was the first writer we'd ever met, and he lived on Lyth Hill.

I knew Lyth Hill well – it was where we flew our paper kite, it was the best place for puddles, and was so close to town we sometimes went there after tea.

When I go there, I still think about Quill Hedgehog and the sausages he cooked with Horatio Fitzworthy the cat as they summoned up courage for their great adventure.

Lyth Hill is a short bus ride from Shrewsbury but proximity to town is only part of its appeal – at just 163 metres it makes for an easy family walk with good views of higher Shropshire hills in the south. Lawley, Caradoc, the Long Mynd and Wenlock Edge stretch heady and blue beyond green and yellow fields.

Alluring

Or sometimes like the other day when the weather was moody and cool, they lie dissolved and alluring beyond layers of white cloud. Yarn, twine, wagon rope, sacks, reins, sheep halters, whip cord, gin rope, sump rope, latching line, platted gaskin, hemp, fishing nets, kibbling: the lane I loved for puddles is Rope Walk. Rope was made here from linseed and flax that grew in the fields, and processed in the windmill (now ruined). It was stretched and twisted along the lane and exported to ships, farms, soldiers and mines throughout Britain and beyond.

In recent weeks it has been fresh with summer. The grassy hillside is tinged red by sorrel and dances in dandelion clocks, plantain, buttercups and clover.

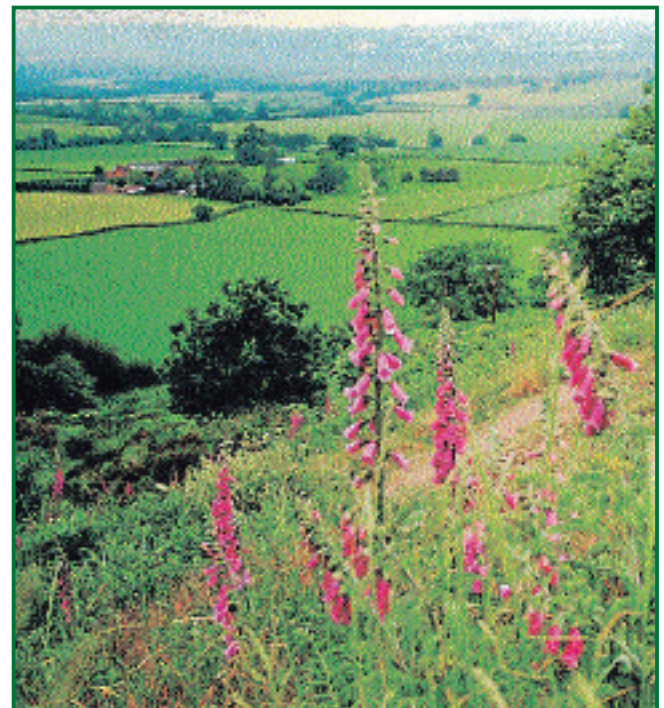
Broom, fulsome and yellow, and foaming cow parsley edge the lane leading to Spring Coppice. We make a diversion to follow a path trodden into the grass around an oak – a secret and perfect climbing tree. Spring Coppice is the inside-of-a-wine-bottle green. There are young twisted oaks and new holly, pink campion, yellow archangel and stitchwort, and the air wobbles with calls of song birds and chiffchaffs.

There were no deer to be seen in the fields that day, but you can buy fresh venison from the farm at the edge of the woods.

As we climbed back up the hillside, it was the hedgerow plants we noticed – jack-by-the-hedge, rampant mint, and escaped honesty. The fields were green or drifting yellow with canola, and the clouds a luminous white.

Mary Webb the war time novelist lived on Lyth Hill for a while, and from her 'home of colour and light' she wrote 'The House in Dormer Forest.' John Waddington-Feather I believe, lives here still. His poem printed in full on the hill-top information board, pays homage to his lyrical home:

*Ancient, these blue hills in the haze
Harmonise with farms and woods
below,
Co-ordinate an age-old beauty
Which is Shropshire's own;
And though I walk this way a
thousand times,
That sudden vista from Old Coppice
road
Will never fail to thrill.*



Lyth Hill. Image taken from A Boot Up The Shropshire Hills by Bob Caddick and Bob Alton.



A view to the east from Lyth Hill



The viewing platform at Lyth Hill

Walks

Walk the coast: Aberystwyth to Borth with Julie Bromilow-Nicklen



Constitution Hill, from where the seaside town slate roofs and castle stones melt south into the glistening sweep of Cardigan Bay

Survey the ocean on a cliff top walk

There are few things as bracing as a cliff top walk – the intake of sharp salt wind as you survey the ocean from rugged paths, giddy with the summer scent of grasses and the sound of wind-tossed bird song.

This is a roller-coaster vigorous six-mile walk with steep climbs and slippery descents, but the wildlife and views are well worth the challenge. Starting from Aberystwyth seafront, a Victorian funicular railway trundles up Constitution Hill from where the seaside town slate roofs and castle stones melt south into the glistening sweep of Cardigan Bay. (The funicular's a good option if you'd rather take it easy – from the top of Constitution Hill it's a gentle walk and descent to Clarach Bay for Aberystwyth bound buses – but check the times first).

Heading north to Borth the Llyn peninsula lies far ahead in vanishing blue distances across an expanse of sea so vast I almost believe I'll see whales. Dolphins are much more likely, though they look tiny from up here.

Soaring

There are peregrines too – soaring alongside or high above, neat and powerful. This time a red kite hangs languidly over the grazing lambs, dipping below and floating above the hill-field horizon. Often there are choughs, chattering and close enough to see their scarlet beaks, but I love the stonechats best – they keep pace just ahead of us, flitting along the fence posts. And there are flowers – in early spring blackthorn frames the sea, and later the gorse is brilliant, ebullient, flashing yellow against the blue horizon. Sea thrift dances among stitchwort, campion and violets.

This wild coastal stretch is in easy reach of Shropshire – you can be there by 9.30am if you catch the first train from Shrewsbury and back home for tea if you like. Borth and Aberystwyth are linked by trains and buses, so you only have to walk one way and it's lovely in both directions. Where you start really depends on where you want to watch the sunset from, or whether you're after a guaranteed fry-up first – Borth out of season is a tumbleweed kind of town and you take your chances with café opening times, good though they are when you get lucky.

The layered cliffs are Silurian; 430 million years of sand, stone and mud. Two million years ago in the last Ice Age, glaciers shoved stones ahead of them (moraines) to form coastal spits, reaching for Ireland. You can see one; Sarn Gynfelyn at Wallog when the tide is low, stretching stony and enticing as an ancient road into the water. Legend claims it is a road leading to Cantref Gwaelod the kingdom of Wales lost beneath the waves when a drunken gate-keeper slept through his watch. They say you can still hear the whisper of ancient bells on stormy nights...

● Want to find out more? Borth Tourist Information – 01970 871174, Aberystwyth Tourist Information – 01970 612125, www.traveline.org.uk



Stanmore park is home to a touring caravan site and beautiful wildlife



The River Worfe running through the village of Burcote, Bridgnorth

Trip that offers a great combination

Bridgnorth

DISTANCE: 6.5 miles (10.4km)

MINIMUM TIME: 2hrs 30min

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: ★★☆☆

PARKING: Severn Park, off A442 on the east bank of the River Severn at Bridgnorth. An energetic walk with a combination of sheer cliffs and valleys, the most spectacularly sited town in Shropshire

1 Cross the A442, turn left, then right to the cemetery. Here, take a footpath, left, climbing steeply. The gradient eases: turn right on a fenced path, then climb again through woods. At the top keep left to reach a waymarked junction.

2 Fork left, descending at first before the path (Jacob's Ladder) levels out to contour in an undulating fashion round High Rock and then Pendlestone Rock. At a junction, keep to the higher path, which soon swings right. Leaving the trees behind, it passes Woodside Farm, then merges with the farm access track.

3 Meeting a lane, turn right for a few paces, then left at a footpath sign. Pass a house and go through a gate into a field. Proceed along the edge almost to the end, then turn right to a gate opposite. Turn left into a narrow field and descend in the bottom of a valley.

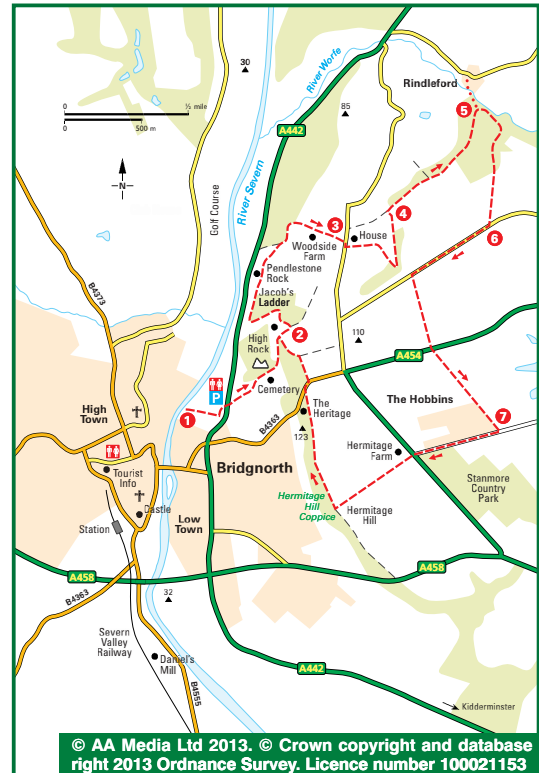
4 Meet a track by a sandstone building and turn right along a steep-sided valley. Where the main track bends right, keep straight on along a grassy path through bracken. Eventually you come to a junction with a sandy track beside the River Worfe.

5 Your onward route is to the right, but first it's worth a short detour to the left to explore the lovely hamlet of Rindleford. Resuming the walk, return to the junction and follow the sandy track, first by the river then swinging right to climb gently out of the valley.

6 Turn right when you reach a lane. After 600yds (549m) turn left at a waymarked gate and follow a footpath along a field-edge. This leads to the A454 and continues on the other side, past a housing estate called The Hobbins.

7 Turn right on another road, which runs past Stanmore Country Park, to the A454. Cross to a track opposite, by Hermitage Farm. Follow the track round right at the top. As you approach metal gates, go through a gap in the hedge and continue along a narrow path, always close to the edge of the wood. Audibly nearing the B4363, look for a parallel path on the left, which descends past The Hermitage. Cross the road to a footpath opposite and follow this, with very steep slopes on the left, until a sharp left turn takes you back down past the cemetery to the A442 and Severn Park.

● Courtesy of the AA's Shropshire Walks In A Box series.
<http://shop.theaa.com/store/walking>



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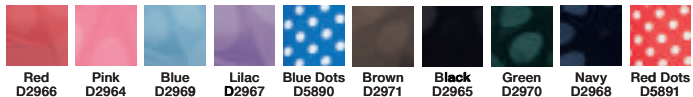
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Walks

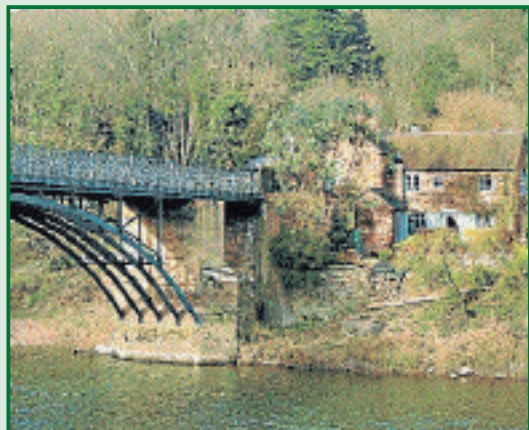
Coalport

DISTANCE: 5 miles

TIME: Minimum 2 hours

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: ★★☆☆

HIGHLIGHTS: Woodland, rivers and industrial remains in the world-famous Ironbridge Gorge.



Views – this route takes you across Coalport Bridge

Take a tour around world-famous gorge

1 Park next to Bedlam Furnaces on Waterloo Road. To the left of the furnaces a path climbs into parkland, then zig-zags up. Turn right at the top and emerge facing The Golden Ball Inn.

2 Skirt left of the pub then turn right at the junction with Jockey Bank, to pass the pub car park. Go left at a junction and through a gate into a wood. A stepped path climbs to a junction. Take the right-hand path, climbing beside woodland to a way marked junction.

3 Turn right on a path (South Telford Way), which runs across two meadows into woodland. Ignore smaller paths and at a waymarked junction fork left. The track swings left, then a stony track goes right, with houses left.

4 After a bend left and a straight section, a stile right gives access to Lee Dingle. Follow the main path. At a fork keep right then down steps to a road. Cross to Legges Way, turn left under two bridges, then turn right at the museum entrance.

5 Go past the coach park then turn right along the railings, skirting the Blists Hill site. Ignore paths left and keep close to the railings. Keep parallel to the canal until you glimpse the top of the great Hay Incline, then start to descend just to its left, alongside more railings.

6 Descend to a former railway at a bridge under the incline. Turn left then fork right at an embedded railway wheel and zig-zag down to the road. Turn right to pass The Shakespeare Inn. Cross a bridge over the incline, then turn left and left again to the tow path of the canal. Recross the canal at the next footbridge and continue walking to eventually join Coalport High Street. Keep ahead to join the Silkin Way via The Brewery Inn car park; follow it to Coalport Bridge and cross the river.

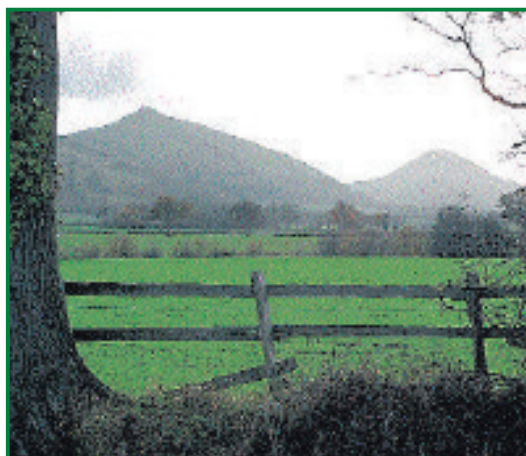
7 Turn right onto Severn Way. Go through a picnic area, then climb away from the river to follow a former track bed. Turn right at signs for Silkin Way via Jackfield Bridge; the lane loops left to The Boat Inn. Continue past cottages, follow a track below Maws Craft Centre then along another narrow track.

8 Emerge on an access track, but as it bends left leave it again. Emerge into a street, pass Jackfield Tile Museum and keep ahead at Jackfield Sidings, passing the Black Swan. When a bridge crosses the path go down right to the river. Cross Jackfield Bridge, then turn left. Pass the Robin Hood Inn and the Bird in Hand pubs and return to Bedlam Furnaces.

● Courtesy of the AA's Shropshire Walks In A Box series. <http://shop.theaa.com/store/walking>



Start and finish point – The Bedlam Furnaces



Comley sits between Lawley, left, and Caer Caradoc, right



View on the Long Mynd looking towards Caer Caradoc

Sublime views at top of rugged hill



Walkers head up the Lawley hill

Caer Caradoc

by Julie Bromilow-Nicklen



In the niche between Caradoc and Lawley is the tiny hamlet of Comley where Britain's earliest 'trilobites' were discovered in 1888.

The quarry is humble, but you can peer over the edge. The fossil find seems an apt tribute to mark the age of these hills; Caradoc, Lawley and Ragleth to the east of Church Stretton were erupted into being by volcanic activity in the Cambrian Age, 500 million years ago.

Not as old as the Pre-Cambrian Long Mynd across the valley, but ancient nonetheless.

You can walk to Caer Caradoc from Church Stretton which is well served by trains and buses from Shrewsbury and Ludlow.

Across the A49 and through the fields, my favourite approach is up the valley with Helmeth Hill and Woods to your right and Caradoc rising left.

This small valley seems Arcadian to me, it's something to do with the gentle climb through and beyond the trees rising among foxgloves and finches and thistles, between the hills and beneath craggy Three Fingers Rock.

Gradual

You have a choice of steep climbs to your left, or you can carry on round the eastern length of the hill towards Comley for a more gradual ascent.

I chose a steep path, leaving grasshoppers and hawthorns on the lower flanks.

It's a stiff climb and the breeze at the top was sweet and welcome. From below the summit seems bald and brown but at the top, larks rise from springy turf and whinberries and bracken are quietly grizzled by sheep.

The rocky outcrops provide dramatic foreground and clarity to the views beyond; to the valleys, batches and hollows cutting into the Long Mynd in the west, south to Helmeth and Hope Bowdler hills, east across the flat English plains, and north to Law-



ley rising pasty-shaped from the fields. This is also where Caractacus is said to have hidden from the Romans in a cave when the hill was a fort and home to the Celtic Cornavii tribe. Caer Caradoc (Caradoc's seat in Welsh) is named after Caractacus who famously fought against the Roman invasion till he was captured and taken to Rome so the Italian civilians could see a fierce Briton.

The hill fort rampart rings are still clearly visible at the summit from where you can also see the A49, built first by the Romans to link Uriconium with Magnis. This road follows the Church Stretton fault line

whose seismic volatility created the hills long before people lived and battled there.

Whatever your interest in tribes and trilobites, it's a rugged hill with sublime views from a peaceful summit.

If you find the climb too steep, you can circle the base of the hill round open land to the east and through shady hazel trees in the west, and admire the craggy splendour from beneath.

● More information on trilobites and Comley Quarry visit www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk. Map courtesy of Google.



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GIG GUIDE

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Screening of thriller is a treat for film buffs

GIG GUIDE

with Edward Roberts



FILM buffs are in for a visual feast as Kinokulture will be screening sci-fi thriller *Gravity* at The Attfield Theatre this weekend.

Directed by Alfonso Cuarón the film stars Sandra Bullock and George Clooney as a pair of astronauts, who are stranded in space after the mid orbit destruction of their shuttle.

Cuarón is perhaps best known for his previous films *Children of Men* and *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*.

Originally released in October of last year the film has garnered critical acclaim, in particular for the work of cinematographer Emmanuel Lubezki.

It's easy to understand why, as the film is a real visual tour de force, with some of the most awe inspiring imagery you'll see on the big screen.

Both actors put in stellar performances, but Sandra Bullock in particular deserves credit, carrying the film for the majority of its 91 minute run time.

Gravity is easily one of the best films of 2013 so make sure to give it a look.

The film will be screened in 2D tonight (Friday) and 3D on Saturday. Tickets cost £6 for adults and £4 for under 16s. To book them you can call



Rose Cheney on stage at the Lowfield Inn.

the kinokulture cinema box office on 0845 2500517.

Don't worry music fans there's still plenty on for you to enjoy this week.

In fact if you head down to the Lowfield Inn, Marton tonight (Friday) then you can catch talented singer-songwriter Rose Cheney.

Armed with just her keyboard and a voice like liquid gold, this is not your average singer songwriter.

Both a gifted singer and pianist, her music brings to mind some of the best elements of RnB and the odd Jazz influence.

If you're a fan of Alicia Keys or Diana Krall then chances are this is for you.

The gig starts at 8pm and is free entry, so there's no reason not to go.

As per usual Monday night is open mic at The Golden Lion Hotel,

Llanymynech. Anyone is welcome to come along and join in, no matter what style of music they play, so you can expect an interesting variety of styles.

So whatever you play whether it's folk, pop or rock, why not head along and make a name for yourself?

It starts at 8pm and is free entry.

Fancy yourself a bit of a blues expert? Then make sure you head over to The Golden Lion the following night (Tuesday) as it's the weekly Blues Jam Night.

Whether you're a seasoned musician or just starting out, anyone is welcome and even if you don't play an instrument you can just enjoy listening to the music.

It starts at 8pm and is a no brainer for any self respecting blues fan.

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THE ARTS

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Top honours for young in contest

by Pam Kingsley

PUPILS from a private school in Oswestry took top honours in a public speaking competition.

Oswestry School's senior public speaking team were winners of the town heat of the Rotary Youth Speaks competition for the second year.

Judges and the audience enjoyed listening to the team's presentation, beginning with chairwoman Elise Fisher followed by a speech on STEM – science, technology, engineering and maths – by Kyle Phillips and ending with a vote of thanks given by Verity Bowen.

The Oswestry heat of the national public speaking competition, which is now in its fifth year, took place at Oswestry Library.

Pupils from Oswestry School took part in both the intermediate and senior competition.

Positive

Alan Biles-Liddell, head of English at Oswestry School, said: "This was a remarkable achievement when it is taken into account that Kyle is in Year 11 and was competing against members of the upper and lower sixth forms from other schools.

"It is a great pleasure to see the public speaking at Oswestry School developing in such a positive way."

The team now go forward to the district final, which will be held at Glyndwr University in Wrexham in March.



Kyle Phillips, Elise Fisher and Verity Bowen of Oswestry School.

The school's prep department choir joined Cantiones Chamber choir for their Carols by Candlelight concert at Christchurch, Oswestry on December 14.

Pupils from the Bellan House choir at Oswestry School joined the Cantiones Chamber choir to perform several carols including the Carol of the Field-Mice, Good King Wenceslas and the Infant King.

Mrs Sue Morris, music teacher and choir mistress, said: "The pupils sang enthusiastically and thoroughly enjoyed the experience of performing with such a well-established choir."

Concert goers were also treated to excerpts from Rachmaninov's Vespers and Eight movements of Benjamin Britten's 'A Ceremony of Carols' accompanied by harpist Alice French during the latter half of the concert.

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NOSTALGIA & NEWS

01691 668094

Gas fitter will face trial over charges

A GAS fitter is to face a magistrates court trial for allegedly incorrectly fitting potentially dangerous fryers in Essex and Norfolk fish and chip shops.

Self-employed Richard Stowe, of Gobowen Road, Oswestry, who is said to have been unqualified and who traded as Black Country Ranges Ltd, is charged with four health and safety offences.

When he appeared at Chelmsford Magistrates' Court he pleaded not guilty and will now stand trial before magistrates on a date to be fixed next year.

Stowe is accused of carrying out work on gas pipes and fittings when he was not approved by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) nor, it is claimed, was he on the Gas Safe Register when he carried out work at Dukes Fish Bar in Duke Street, Chelmsford.

He is further charged with failing to ensure as a director of Black Country Ranges that persons were not exposed to risk by his neglect, and two similar offences relating to Nino's Traditional Fish and Chip Shop in Squires Hill, Upper Marham, King's Lynn on or about 5 August 2011.

HSE prosecutor Matthew Taylor told magistrates their powers of a £20,000 maximum fine for each offence and/or custody, were sufficient to deal with the case.

by Toby Neal

LAST month we dipped into the newly-published autobiography of long-time Oswestry MP John Biffen and told how he overcame doubts about his rural background to be selected to fight the seat at a 1961 by-election.

In this second extract, he tells how he triumphed in that campaign.

"In the mid-1950s I had been asked to apply as a candidate for Stoke-on-Trent Central. The name had no romance – 'sounds like a signal box', said a member of the Birmingham bachelor flat I shared," he writes.

"Coventry East was better, but even that was an urban abstraction. Oswestry, by contrast, was magic. I had dropped back into my rural childhood."

With a strong Welsh presence, particularly on market day, he was advised by a Central Office minder not to refer to "English", but always to "British".

In normal political times, Oswestry would be regarded as natural Tory territory, but after a decade of power the Tory team, and especially Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, were beginning to look tired. And voting Liberal at by-elections was a natural way of giving a complacent government a prod.

Mr Biffen says that although he did not approach the Oswestry by-election with unshakable confidence, he did not consider defeat likely.

"Transport House, doubtless with Hugh Gaitskell's connivance, parachuted a brilliant candidate, Brian Walden, into the constituency. He was a first-class speaker and combined this skill with an easy manner and the shrewd use of populism."

Even so, Mr Biffen feared the Liberal candidate, Sunday Express journalist John Buchanan, more.

"He had none of the panache of Brian Walden, but he was personable and likely



Brian Walden – 'a brilliant candidate'.

to pick up Tory protesters. There were plenty of protest topics, ranging from NHS contracts for chemists to rural services.

"Some villages still did not have electricity and the Oswestry rural district had a declining population."

"Finally John Dayton, a building contractor, arrived with a decorated double-decker bus proclaiming the ills of the Common Market."

"As the Patriotic Front candidate he

livened up affairs and I gloomily concluded it could be at my expense."

The by-election was the only occasion on which Mr Biffen was asked to dress down.

Intellect

"I thought my working London suit was drab enough, but I was instructed to wear a 'rat catcher' jacket."

Apart from the tearing down of some posters and a particularly lively eve-of-



John Biffen MP, left, at the new Meadows School site in Oswestry in 1993 with building contractor John Richards.



John Biffen pictured at the House of Lords with his wife when he became Baron Biffen of Tanat.

poll meeting, the campaign was quiet and good natured.

"In measured style and political courtesy Walden and I were lookalikes at the count."

"While our supporters kept to themselves in the Territorial Hall at Oswestry, we pursued a developing friendship over cribbage. The local paper decided this must be chess, given our presumed intellect."

Mr Biffen won by 3,781 votes over

Buchanan, with Walden only slightly behind. Although it was not considered a good Tory result, it launched Mr Biffen on a long and distinguished career as the Oswestry MP.

Walden, incidentally, became an MP later and after leaving Parliament carved a new career on television as a political interviewer.

● *Semi-Detached* by John Biffen is published by Biteback Publishing.

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Finest workhorse but not a 4x4 posing Chelsea tractor

Drive time
with Graham Breeze



IF YOU are one of those looking to pose outside the school gate in a gleaming 4x4 the Land Rover Defender is not for you.

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There's very little finery about this model. In fact apart from a few cosmetic makeovers the Defender is just as it was decades ago when I cut my teeth as a budding driver on the farm tracks and fields near my home.

And that's been the strength of this British icon so I have to question why Land Rover are trying to strengthen its appeal with gimmicks such as seat design and sound systems.

The defender was born to be a workhorse and while I can understand the desire to personalise your vehicle with the contrasting roof colours that are now available I see no need for anything else.

Customers seeking a higher level of specification can now enhance their vehicle with three additional options and a choice of two new exterior body colours, Barolo Black and Havana.



If you want to impress at the school gates this 4x4 is not for you



The Defender will easily cross a desert or climb a mountain



Land Rover has tweaked the dash

Smart new, contrast roof colours can now be chosen against the majority of the Defender paint palette. In addition to the standard Fuji White, customers can now opt for Santorini Black, Indus Silver, Orkney Grey or Firenze Red. The Firenze Red can be chosen with the Santorini Black roof and the Baltic Blue with Indus Silver or simply retain their body colour.

Premium part leather seats which contour your body are available to the driver and front seat passenger, sporting the Land Rover logo on the backrest. But it's the EU4 2.2-litre diesel engine, which replaced the EU4 2.4-litre diesel in 2012, matching it for power, torque and fuel

consumption that really counts when it comes to performance.

The engine produces 122PS@3,500rpm and torque of 360Nm@2,000rpm, giving a 0-60mph time of 14.7 seconds and a top speed of 90mph. CO2 emissions on the combined cycle are 266g/km.

The GFT MT 82 six-speed gearbox has an excellent ratio spread, high top gear for cruising and enhanced low-speed crawl capability. The lower first gear offers low crawl speed making towing on-road and off-road much easier.

The low-down engine torque also helps in-gear acceleration and the tall sixth gear ensures

excellent real-world cruising, refinement and fuel economy.

Land Rover has tweaked the dash and improved seating over the years but you could never describe the Defender as comfortable.

It's an extremely hard drive, you still need "Popeye" size muscles when parking while front seats seem too close to the doors leaving little space for the driver's right arm yet there is a vast space between driver and passenger.

If you want to cross a desert, climb a mountain or negotiate difficult farmland the Defender is for you. If you want to pose and impress at the wheel of a 4x4 look elsewhere.

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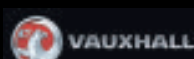
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2009 09 SKODA OCTAVIA SCOUT 2.0 TDi 4X4 ESTATE Manual. Blue, 64,000 miles, FSH **£10,999**



2009 09 LANDROVER DISCOVERY 3 TDV6 GS Automatic. Metallic Grey, 50,000 miles, 2 owners, full Black leather, FSH, roof bars **£20,999**



2008 08 VW GOLF GT TDi 140bhp 2.0 TDi 5-door 6-speed Manual. Metallic Grey, full leather, privacy glass, 54,000 miles, FSH **£9,499**



2008 58 VW TIGUAN 2.0 TDi SPORT 4MOTION. Champagne Silver, 38,000 miles **£13,999**



2011 11 AUDI A1 1.6 TDi SPORT 3-door. Powder Blue, full Black leather, 22,000 miles, 1 owner, FSH, free road tax **£12,999**



2009 09 VW GOLF GT TDi 140bhp Manual, 5-door. p. Metallic Black, Full Leather, 47,000 miles, FSH **£11,499**

2007 07	AUDI A3 2.0 SLINE SPORT BACK	6 Speed Manual Bright Red, 2 tone leather, Full play Roof, only 30,000 miles, FSH.....	SOLD
2010 59	ALFA ROMEO 1.4 MITO LUSO	3-door 6-speed. Bright Red, 39,300 miles, alloy wheels, air con	£7,699
2009 59	MINI CLUBMAN 1.6 COOPER Auto.	1 owner, 29,000 miles, White, FSH	£8,999
2002 52	ALFA ROMEO SPIDER T-SPARK LUSO	Convertible. Silver Metallic, leather seats, alloy wheels, 58,100 miles.....	£3,699
2010 10	BMW 118 des 6-Speed Manual	5-door. Bright Red, FSH, 62,000 miles.....	£10,499
2010 60	BMW 318i ES SALOON Manual.	1 owner, 27,000 miles, Metallic Black, FSH.....	£11,999
2008 08	BMW 318i TOURING SE Manual.	Metallic Black, full Cream leather, 88,000 miles, FSH	£6,999
2006 56	BMW 535D SPORT TOURING.	Silver Metallic, 68,000 miles, 1 owner	SOLD
2006 06	BMW 118d 5-door Manual.	Metallic Grey, FSH.....	£6,999
2009 59	CITROEN C4 VTR+ HDi 5-door.	Red, 60,200 miles	£5,799
2012 12	CITROEN DS3 1.6 HDi D SPORT Manual.	Metallic Blue, Black roof, 11,000 miles, 1 owner, FSH	£12,999
2012 12	CITROEN DS3 1.6 HDi D STYLE Manual.	Bright Yellow, Black roof, 19,000 miles, free road tax, FSH	£11,999
2011 11	FIAT PUNTO 1.2 GRAND PRIX 5-door.	White, one owner, low mileage.....	SOLD
2006 06	FIAT PUNTO 1.2 ACTIVE 3-door.	Metallic Black, 83,000 miles	£2,499
2009 09	FORD CMAX ZETEC TDCi Manual	Metallic Silver, 43,000 miles.....	£6,999
2010 60	FORD FOCUS 1.6 ZETEC 5-door Manual.	Bright Blue Metallic, only 5,000 miles, 1 owner, FSH.....	£8,999
2006 06	FORD FOCUS 1.6 TDCi GHIA Manual 5-door.	Metallic Silver, 63,000 miles.....	£4,999
2005 05	FORD FOCUS 1.8 TDCi EDGE	Metallic Silver, 81,000 miles.....	£2,999
2009 09	FORD MONDEO 2.0 ZETEC Hatch back	1 owner, only 16,000 miles, Manual, Metallic Silver	£7,999
2010 10	FORD FIESTA 1.6 TITANIUM 5-door.	Manual, Metallic Red, 18,000 miles, one owner, FSH	£8,999
2008 08	FORD FIESTA 1.2 ZETEC 3-door Manual.	Metallic Red, 59,000 miles, FSH.....	£4,299
2009 59	FORD FIESTA 1.4 ZETEC 5-door Manual.	Metallic Blue, 26,000 miles, 1 owner, FSH.....	SOLD
2003 03	JAGUAR X TYPE 2.5 V6 4-door Manual.	Red with half leather upholstery, 2 owners, 40,500 miles, immaculate condition	£4,999
2010 10	KIA SPORTAGE 4x4 XS Diesel Manual.	Metallic Silver, full Black leather, 32,000 miles, 1 owner, FSH.....	SOLD
2009 09	LANDROVER DISCOVERY 3 TDV6 GS Automatic.	Metallic Grey, 50,000 miles, 2 owners, full Black leather, FSH, roof bars	£20,999
2007 07	LANDROVER FREELANDER 2 TD4 GS,	6 speed manual, Metallic Red, 49,000 miles, 2 Owners, FSH.....	£12,499
2006 06	LAND ROVER DISCOVERY 3 TDV6 HSE Automatic.	Metallic Blue, Cream leather, 57,000 miles, FSH.....	SOLD
2012 62	MG 6 1.8 TURBO HATCH 5-door,	Manual, 1,800 miles, White. Like brand new.....	£8,999
2005 05	MINI COOPER S CONVERTIBLE Automatic.	Metallic Blue, full leather, 45,000 miles, FSH	£6,999
2011 11	NISSAN JUKE ACENTA 1.6 DCi Manual,	Metallic Red, only 15,000 miles, 1 owner, FSH.....	£10,999
2007 57	PEUGEOT 207 CC SPORT 1.6 Manual.	Metallic Silver, 43,000 miles, FSH.....	£5,499
2011 11	PEUGEOT 207 VERVE 1.4 5-door.	Light Metallic Blue, 24,000 miles, 1 owner, FSH.....	£6,999
2010 10	RENAULT MEGANE 1.6 5-door.	Blue, 1 owner, 21,000 miles.....	£6,999
2010 10	RENAULT MODUS 1.2 EXPRESSION 5-door,	Manual. Bright Blue Metallic. 1 owner, 42,000 miles, FSH.....	£5,499
2009 59	RENAULT CLIO 16v EXPRESSION 5-door.	Metallic Silver, 25,000 miles.....	£5,999
2002 02	SEAT LEON 1.4 S 16V 5-door.	Bronze Metallic, alloy wheels, 79,000 miles, excellent condition	£1,999
2009 09	SKODA OCTAVIA SCOUT 2.0 TDi 4X4 ESTATE	Manual. Blue, 64,000 miles, FSH	£10,999
2009 09	SKODA 1.8 TFSi SALOON Manual.	Metallic Blue, 36,000 miles.....	£7,499
2006 55	SUZUKI IGNIS 1.5 GLX VVT 5-door.	Grey Metallic, 57,500 miles, alloy wheels	£3,999
2006 56	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 SXi 5-door	Manual, Metallic Black, 51,000 miles.....	£4,499
2009 59	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 SXi 3-door	Manual ,Metallic Silver, 47,000 miles	£5,299
2008 08	VAUXHALL MERIVA 1.6 BREEZE HATCH 5-door	Manual. Metallic Blue, 31,000 miles.....	£5,499
2006 06	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6 CLUB 5-door.	Silver Metallic, 58,000 miles, alloy wheels	£3,999
2008 08	VOLVO XC90 DE SE Geartronic ,	7 Seats, 43,000 miles, half leather interior FSH Graphite Grey Metallic.....	£17,999
2010 60	VW EOS 2.0 TDi S 6 Speed Manual.	Metallic Black, 1 owner, 48,000 miles, FSH	£9,999
2006 06	VW PASSAT 2.0 TDi SPORT ESTATE	Manual. Metallic blue, 86,000 miles, FSH	£5,999
2006 56	VW GOLF 2.0 GTi 5-door.	Black, 2 owners, 6 speed manual, 37,200 miles, cruise control, alloys	SOLD
2001 Y	VW GOLF 1.9 S TDi Estate.	Red Metallic, 1 owner, 56,000 miles	SOLD
2009 09	VW GOLF GT TDi 140bhp Manual,	5-door. p. Metallic Black, Full Leather, 47,000 miles, FSH	£11,499
2008 08	VW GOLF GT TDi 140bhp 2.0 TDi 5-door	6-speed Manual. Metallic Grey, full leather, privacy glass, 54,000 miles, FSH	£9,499
2008 58	VW TIGUAN 2.0 TDi SPORT 4MOTION.	Champagne Silver, 38,000 miles.....	£13,999
2013 13	VW TRANSPORTER CAMPER VAN	Metallic Dark Wood, 11,000 miles, Brand New Camper 4 Berth Conversion done by Gee Wagen, Oswestry, top spec, air con, cruise control, FSH	£38,500

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SPORT



Aeron Edwards whips in a cross as Bala survive a goalmouth scramble at Park Hall

Guilsfield fight back to keep run going

GUILDSFIELD are now unbeaten in their last seven outings after hitting back to salvage a 3-3 home draw with Caernarfon Town to cement their top-five position in the Cymru Alliance.

The villagers had been 3-1 down with 15 minutes to go, Darren Thomas netting twice for the Seaside and Lee McArdle getting the other – helped by some post-Christmas gifts from the hosts.

But Matt Burton's side rallied courtesy of a Jack Harris penalty and an 85th-minute strike from Ryan Jones to earn a share of the spoils in the heavy conditions.

Caernarfon had twice led in the first half through Darren Thomas and a McArdle free kick, with James Henderson levelling on the half hour in the heavy conditions.

The Guils were caught on the break when Thomas increased the visitors' lead, but refused to surrender with Harris hitting the post before converting a 77th-minute penalty after Henderson had been tripped in the box.

Parity

Jones, on loan from TNS, then earned parity with five minutes remaining when firing low into the corner of the net after good work by Danny Barton, who had climbed off his sick bed to appear as substitute.

The sides came face to face again this Saturday when they met in the second round of the Huws Gray Cup, also at the Recreation Ground.

The week before, the Guils gained their first ever victory at Porthmadog with a 2-0 success in atrocious conditions at the Traeth.

Harris gave the visitors the perfect start when his sixth-minute free-kick beat keeper Jamie Hulse who was later forced off with a hamstring injury.

Guilsfield were solid at the back throughout, and never looked back after doubling their advantage 10 minutes into the second period when Harris put a free kick into the box and James Henderson took advantage of a static home defence to send his glancing header into the corner of the net.

Huws Grays Alliance									
P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts			
Cefn Druids	18	14	3	1	56	9	45		
Caernarfon Town	17	12	2	3	54	22	38		
Corwen Borough	17	11	3	3	43	20	36		
Caerswain	16	11	2	3	36	21	35		
Guilsfield	19	8	7	3	30	24	31		
Fint Town United	18	7	8	3	30	33	28		
Holyhead Hospitall	18	6	7	5	34	31	25		
Llanidloes	16	6	4	5	33	24	24		
Rhydymwyn	17	7	1	10	25	41	22		
Porthmadog	17	6	2	9	32	35	20		
Rhayader Town	19	5	4	10	26	43	19		
Pentycastell	16	5	3	8	23	34	18		
Buckley Town	18	3	8	7	27	39	17		
Llanidloes Town	17	3	5	9	22	31	14		
Pentynrhos	20	2	6	12	23	45	12		
Llanrhaeadr	18	3	1	14	22	60	10		

Sick of TV yet? Try our end-of-year sport quiz

FOOTBALL

- 1) Non-league Luton knocked which top-flight side out of last season's FA Cup?
- 2) Name the winners of the four English divisions at the end of the 2012/13 season.
- 3) Which four teams finished bottom of their respective English leagues in 2013?
- 4) Which teams won promotion through the Football League play-offs?
- 5) Name the three beaten play-off finalists.
- 6) Which side finished runners-up to Celtic in the 2013/2014 Scottish Premier League season?
- 7) Who knocked Rangers out in the first round of the Scottish League Cup in August?
- 8) Which player scored the winner as Wigan beat Manchester City 1-0 in the 2013 FA Cup final?
- 9) Who was the first Barclays Premier League manager to leave his job in September 2013?
- 10) Name the winners of the Scottish Championship, League One and League Two in 2013.
- 11) Which striker topped the scoring charts for the 2012/2013 Barclays Premier League with 26 goals?
- 12) Name the losing semi-finalists in the 2013 Capital One Cup, which was won by Swansea when they thrashed Bradford 5-0 at Wembley.
- 13) Which team secured an eighth League of Ireland Premier Division title in October 2013?
- 14) Which team did Chelsea beat to win the 2013 Europa League final?
- 15) Who won the 2013 Major League Soccer Cup final when they beat Real Salt Lake?
- 16) Name the Wales player who retired from international football at the end of the World Cup qualifiers.
- 17) Which two German sides contest the 2013 Champions League final at Wembley in May?
- 18) Who were runners-up to The New Saints in the 2013 League of Wales championship?
- 19) Who was named as assistant to new Republic of Ireland manager Martin O'Neill earlier this year?
- 20) Who became the most expensive footballer in the world when he left Tottenham to join Real Madrid for £85.3m?
- 21) Northern Ireland's all-time leading goalscorer recently announced his retirement. Who is he?
- 22) Who did Scotland beat in the final match of their World Cup qualifying campaign at Hampden Park?

- 23) "He was as hard as nails, as tough as teak." To which fellow Buxby Babe, who died in November, did Sir Bobby Charlton pay this tribute?
- 24) Who was named the new England Women's head coach to replace Hope Powell?
- 25) Which teams have England drawn in the group stage of next year's World Cup?
- CRICKET - THE ASHES
- 26) Name the venue of the fourth Ashes Test in August 2013, where England secured an unassailable 3-0 lead.
- 27) Who was England's leading wicket-taker against Australia in the summer?
- 28) Name Australia's leading batsman in the 2013 Ashes.
- 29) Which England player left the return series in Australia because of a stress-related illness?
- 30) Which famous venue will host the 2013 Boxing Day Ashes Test?
- CRICKET - GENERAL
- 31) Name the West Indian bowler who dismissed Sachin Tendulkar in his final Test innings.
- 32) Where did the world's first underground cricket match take place in early December?
- 33) Who were the winners of the LV= County Championship Division One and Two titles?
- 34) Which Worcestershire batsman scored the most runs in the County Championship last season, with 1,375?
- 35) Name the 2013 Friends Life t20 winners.
- RUGBY UNION
- 36) Wales won the 2013 RBS 6 Nations crown, but against which team did they lose in their opening match in Cardiff?
- 37) Who were the only provincial side to defeat the British & Irish Lions in Australia during the summer?
- 38) Who captained the Lions to victory over Australia in the decisive final Test in Sydney, where Brian O'Driscoll had been controversially dropped?
- 39) Who was named England's player of the QBE Internationals against Australia, Argentina and New Zealand?
- 40) Name the two New Zealanders named 2013 International Rugby Board player and coach of the year.
- 41) Which nation finished bottom of the Six Nations table?
- 42) Name the Welshman who finished as the Six Nations' leading try-scorer with four.
- 43) Which two French club sides



It seems a long time ago, but where did England retain the Ashes this summer (question 26)

- contested the Heineken Cup final?
- 44) Leicester beat which side to claim the 2012/2013 Aviva Premiership crown at Twickenham in May?
- 45) Name the runners-up in the 2012/13 RFU Championship, which was won by Newcastle.
- GOLF
- 46) At which venue did England's Justin Rose claim the US Open title?
- 47) Name the other three major winners in 2013.
- 48) "Eighth hole is a joke, 18th needs a windmill and a clown face." Who said that and why?
- 49) In which event, where he was defending champion, did Northern Ireland's Rory McIlroy walk off the course midway through his second round?
- 50) Who finished second to Red Bull in the Constructors' Championship?
- WIMBLEDON
- 51) Andy Murray ended a 77-year wait for a British men's champion at Wimbledon when he defeated Novak Djokovic – but who did he beat in the semi-final?
- 52) Which French player, who would announce her retirement just weeks later, won the women's singles title?
- 53) Name the Americans who claimed the men's doubles to become the first pair to hold all four grand slams and Olympic gold at the same time.
- 54) Steve Darcis and Sergiy Stakhovsky produced shock wins against which two former champions?
- WIMBLEDON
- 55) Can you name the French venues for the 2013 Rugby League World Cup?
- 56) Where did Britain's Lewis Hamilton win his only Grand Prix in 2013?
- 57) Which German driver took the chequered flag at the British Grand Prix?
- 58) How many races did Sebastian Vettel win as he swept to the 2013 drivers' title?
- 59) Which three races were dropped when the provisional 2014 calendar was reduced from 22 races to 19?
- 60) Who finished second to Red Bull in the Constructors' Championship?
- 61) Andy Murray ended a 77-year wait for a British men's champion at Wimbledon when he defeated Novak Djokovic – but who did he beat in the semi-final?
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- 64) Steve Darcis and Sergiy Stakhovsky produced shock wins against which two former champions?

- 65) Who became the first British woman in 15 years to reach the fourth round?
- 66) Which country beat Serbia to retain the Davis Cup?
- 67) Aside from Murray's Wimbledon triumph, name the winners of the other three men's grand slam titles in 2013.
- 68) Aside from Bartoli at Wimbledon, name the winners of the other three women's grand slam titles in 2013.
- 69) Who were beaten 4-0 by Italy in the final of the Fed Cup?
- 70) Name the host city for the season-ending WTA Tour Championships.
- ATHLETICS
- 71) In March, Team GB athletes Perri Shakes-Drayton and Eilidh Child took gold and silver in which event at the European Indoor Championships in Gothenburg?
- 72) Name the four Jamaicans who were in the men's 100m final at the World Championships in Moscow?
- 73) Which multi-discipline Czech track athlete went unbeaten throughout the 2013 season?
- 74) Over which distance did Mo Farah break the European record in 2013?
- 75) Who were the winners of the men's and women's elite races at the London Marathon?

Four-star Waterloo enjoy win over rivals Welshpool

WATERLOO Rovers took the local bragging rights to ensure they hang on to the coat-tails of the Spar Mid Wales League division one leaders with a 4-1 home win over near neighbours Welshpool Town.

After losing 2-1 to Llan-drindrod Wells the week before, Rovers roared back to make it 10 wins in 12 outings with Charlie Proctor firing a hat-trick and Barry Haralambous getting the other. Pool responded through Shane Davies.

Victory keeps Waterloo joint second, but still five points adrift of unbeaten leaders Llandrindod Wells who made it 14 straight wins with a 2-0 home verdict against Builth Wells with Chris Murphy and Robbie Nicholls on the mark.

A week before, Rovers failed to put the brakes on high flying Llandrindod who ran out 2-1 winners at Maesdyre despite taking the lead through the prolific Steve Hole after enjoying the better of the first half.

But the unbeaten Wellmen hit back with Connor Bird levelling just before the interval, before a 25-yard strike from Richie Powell after the break earned the visitors a narrow victory.

LLANFAIR UNITED kept up the pressure to share second spot after completing the double over lowly DYF-FRYN BANW courtesy of Daniel Jones and Ross Frame in heavy conditions.

Jones headed in an Andrew Hughes corner while Frame fired in after a long throw had been flicked on by Steve Andrew.

Points

Rhys Stephens' side made it a happy festive season as they sealed three points at the expense of their local rivals following their 5-0 success a week before.

Llanfair were made to battle against the wind in the first half but struck through Steve Andrew and Paul Griffiths. They went on to dominate the second half with goals from Griffiths, Chris Gethin and James Davies to run out 5-0 winners.

BERRIEW also stayed in touching distance of the pacesetters with a 4-1 home verdict over MONTGOMERY, which followed the previous week's victory over FOUR CROSSES by a similar score.

Karl Selhearts bagged two of the goals, with Mark Jones and Elliot Jones getting the others, while Nick Rawlings responded.

It was honours even at Treflan but LLANSANTFFRAID VILLAGE were left to reflect on what might have been after being held 1-1 against Carno.

Wayne Austin gave the hosts an early lead, and they had chances to have killed the game off in the second half, but Carno earned parity with a levelled in injury time.

In division two, Abermule were 3-1 home winners against Kerry while Machynlleth won 4-1 against Bont.

Need any help? The answers to our brain teaser

1) Bayern Munich & Borussia Dortmund	17) Gareth Bale	19) Gareth Bale	21) Gareth Bale	23) Gareth Bale	25) Gareth Bale	27) Gareth Bale	29) Gareth Bale	31) Gareth Bale	33) Gareth Bale	35) Gareth Bale	37) Gareth Bale	39) Gareth Bale	41) Gareth Bale	43) Gareth Bale	45) Gareth Bale	47) Gareth Bale	49) Gareth Bale	51) Gareth Bale	53) Gareth Bale	55) Gareth Bale	57) Gareth Bale	59) Gareth Bale	61) Gareth Bale	63) Gareth Bale	65) Gareth Bale	67) Gareth Bale	69) Gareth Bale	71) Gareth Bale	73) Gareth Bale	75) Gareth Bale	77) Gareth Bale	79) Gareth Bale	81) Gareth Bale	83) Gareth Bale	85) Gareth Bale	87) Gareth Bale	89) Gareth Bale	91) Gareth Bale	93) Gareth Bale	95) Gareth Bale	97) Gareth Bale	99) Gareth Bale	101) Gareth Bale	103) Gareth Bale	105) Gareth Bale	107) Gareth Bale	109) Gareth Bale	111) Gareth Bale	113) Gareth Bale	115) Gareth Bale	117) Gareth Bale	119) Gareth Bale	121) Gareth Bale	123) Gareth Bale	125) Gareth Bale	127) Gareth Bale	129) Gareth Bale	131) Gareth Bale	133) Gareth Bale	135) Gareth Bale	137) Gareth Bale	139) Gareth Bale	141) Gareth Bale	143) Gareth Bale	145) Gareth Bale	147) Gareth Bale	149) Gareth Bale	151) Gareth Bale	153) Gareth Bale	155) Gareth Bale	157) Gareth Bale	159) Gareth Bale	161) Gareth Bale	163) Gareth Bale	165) Gareth Bale	167) Gareth Bale	169) Gareth Bale	171) Gareth Bale	173) Gareth Bale	175) Gareth Bale	177) Gareth Bale	179) Gareth Bale	181) Gareth Bale	183) Gareth Bale	185) Gareth Bale	187) Gareth Bale	189) Gareth Bale	191) Gareth Bale	193) Gareth Bale	195) Gareth Bale	197) Gareth Bale	199) Gareth Bale	201) Gareth Bale	203) Gareth Bale	205) Gareth Bale	207) Gareth Bale	209) Gareth Bale	211) Gareth Bale	213) Gareth Bale	215) Gareth Bale	217) Gareth Bale	219) Gareth Bale	221) Gareth Bale	223) Gareth Bale	225) Gareth Bale	227) Gareth Bale	229) Gareth Bale	231) Gareth Bale	233) Gareth Bale	235) Gareth Bale	237) Gareth Bale	239) Gareth Bale	241) Gareth Bale	243) Gareth Bale	245) Gareth Bale	247) Gareth Bale	249) Gareth Bale	251) Gareth Bale	253) Gareth Bale	255) Gareth Bale	257) Gareth Bale	259) Gareth Bale	261) Gareth Bale	263) Gareth Bale	265) Gareth Bale	267) Gareth Bale	269) Gareth Bale	271) Gareth Bale	273) Gareth Bale	275) Gareth Bale	277) Gareth Bale	279) Gareth Bale	281) Gareth Bale	283) Gareth Bale	285) Gareth Bale	287) Gareth Bale	289) Gareth Bale	291) Gareth Bale	293) Gareth Bale	295) Gareth Bale	297) Gareth Bale	299) Gareth Bale	301) Gareth Bale	303) Gareth Bale	305) Gareth Bale	307) Gareth Bale	309) Gareth Bale	311) Gareth Bale	313) Gareth Bale	315) Gareth Bale	317) Gareth Bale	319) Gareth Bale	321) Gareth Bale	323) Gareth Bale	325) Gareth Bale	327) Gareth Bale	329) Gareth Bale	331) Gareth Bale	333) Gareth Bale	335) Gareth Bale	337) Gareth Bale	339) Gareth Bale	341) Gareth Bale	343) Gareth Bale	345) Gareth Bale	347) Gareth Bale	349) Gareth Bale	351) Gareth Bale	353) Gareth Bale	355) Gareth Bale	357) Gareth Bale	359) Gareth Bale	361) Gareth Bale	363) Gareth Bale	365) Gareth Bale	367) Gareth 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Iaquinata quits as troubles deepen

STRUGGLING Llanrhaeadr are on the lookout for a new manager after Mario Iaquinata stepped down following a difficult season that sees the club rooted to the foot of the Cymru Alliance.

After Iaquinata announced his decision, the club were forced to pull out of last Saturday's crucial clash at basement rivals Penrhynoch as they were unable to field a side.

It was a sorry end to the year for the villagers who are deep in the relegation mire and now face the prospect of losing three points to add to their problems.

Jamie Davies is expected to stay on as assistant, and chairman Phil Roberts hopes to fill the void as quickly as possible.

"It's been a difficult season. We've had some fun, but we've not got the results we want, so Mario's decided to step down to give us time to get a new manager in," said Roberts.

"We've just not had the squad we need and we've often been struggling to get a side together."

In their last action under Iaquinata the previous week, Llanrhaeadr suffered a 4-2 home loss to another of their basement rivals, Rhayader Town, whose player-boss Dylan McPhee grabbed a quickfire hat-trick in the second half.

Iwan Williams twice had Llanrhaeadr in front with goals on 10 and 54 minutes, his second a fine strike from 25-yards, with Gareth Hughes pulling one back on the stroke of half-time after a defensive lapse.

But Rhayader roared back with McPhee scoring his treble inside 11 minutes with a header on 55 minutes, followed by neat finishes on 58 and 66 minutes – stoning for a penalty miss in the first half when he crashed a spot-kick against the bar.

Dyke double lifts Town

ON-SONG FC Oswestry Town went into Christmas joint top of the Mercian Regional League division one with a 3-1 win over Rock Rovers at Park Hall, **writes JOHN BRIDGWATER.**

With title rivals Bishop's Castle without any action due to a waterlogged pitch, Town took advantage to go level on points, although they trail the south Shropshire men on goal difference.

After a three-week break, Town started very brightly and dominated the first half-hour with chances for Graham Dyke, Scott Bright and Stefan Ivanov.

Their efforts reaped a reward in the 35th minute when Bright split the defence to put

Ivanov through to slot into the bottom right-hand corner.

Town doubled their lead on 65 minutes when Dyke turned 30 yards from goal before placing a pinpoint shot just over the Rock keeper and into the roof of the net.

Rovers had a few chances but the home defence were solid with Alan Morris and Rob Shone outstanding.

Town extended their lead on 77 minutes when Joe Evans put in a great free-kick for Dyke to rise above the defence and head back into the top corner for his second goal of the game.

Rock managed a consolation goal five minutes from time.

Title-chasing Saints have plenty of work to do

THE New Saints go into the New Year knowing they still have plenty to do if they are to seal another Welsh Premier title triumph after losing top spot in their last action of 2013, **writes JOHN BRIDGWATER.**

A 1-0 defeat at Newtown on Boxing Day saw the defending champions relinquish pole position to Airbus UK – and the Saints would have been desperate to exact swift revenge when they tackled the Robins again on New Year's Day at Park Hall.

Director of football Craig Harrison was anxious to mark two years in charge with a return to winning ways after just one point from his side's last two outings.

"The pitch was heavy at Newtown, we couldn't get our passing game going, but

we're not going to make excuses, you've got to adapt to different conditions," he said.

"We didn't do enough to win but, having said that, I don't think they did either, but you've got to give them credit for the way they played and they scored a good goal."

Outstanding

By contrast, Newtown manager Chris Hughes could hardly be happier as he hailed an outstanding performance from his side in the Boxing Day victory over the Saints.

"The players were again fantastic," he said.

"We set them up and they delivered the game plan to perfection."

"I don't think you'll see a better performance all season from any other Welsh Pre-

mier League team the way we played today, especially against TNS. We thoroughly our win and they can have no complaints."

The Robins are now within touching distance of a top six place and their ticket of the Championship Conference in the second half of the season.

The Mid Wales side have often proved the scourge of TNS in the past, taking four points off the defending champions last season, and were again up for the challenge with Sean Evans providing the game's decisive moment when firing past keeper Paul Harrison early in the second half.

The Saints started well enough on a heavy surface with Ryan Fraughan curling an early effort against the post for the Saints after cutting in from the right.

But, for most part, chances were in short supply before the stalemate was broken three minutes into the second period when former Manchester United trainee Evans latched on to a ball over the top before racing clear and firing past Harrison.

Buoyed by the breakthrough, the hosts spurned a terrific double chance to increase their lead when Andy Jones headed against the bar and Luke Boundford saw his effort bounce off the bar.

The Saints battled to get back into the game, but struggled to break down a stubborn home defence although they almost salvaged a point when keeper Mike Platt pulled off a magnificent save from Chris Marriott's late free kick.

Pool blown away as Llanidloes take charge

WELSHPOOL remain third from bottom in the Swalec League division three (north) after losing 22-5 in a windswept affair at Powys rivals Llanidloes.

The blustery conditions made the going tough, with a young Pool battered in the first half, but they managed to restrict their dominant hosts to a solitary penalty by the interval.

Despite coming more into the game after the break, the visitors conceded three tries but, at 17-0 down, did manage a score themselves when scrum-half Joe Stranks touched down for an unconverted score.

However, improving Llani always held the upper hand through their forwards, and never looked likely to allow their grip to slip.

Centre Adam Price grabbed one touchdown as well as kicking a penalty and two conversions to lead the way, while back row Sam Vaughan and wing Andy Robinson also crossed the line.

Welshpool are back in action at home to Holyhead on Saturday, a game they will be keen to win with their Anglesey visitors lying one place below in the league.

Relegation fears grow for Saints

ST MARTINS slipped deeper into the basement mire in the West Midlands League division one after suffering a 1-0 home loss to fellow strugglers Shenstone.

Despite dominating the encounter at Park Hall, they paid the price for failing to take several good opportunities as the visitors grabbed the only goal of the game 10 minutes from time.

The week before, the Saints crashed 7-0 at high-flying AFC Bridgnorth Town.

Lying second from bottom, Ryan Butcher's side will be out to bounce back at Stone Old Alleynians on Saturday – before taking on the same side in the league cup the following week.

OWNERS DELIGHT AT NATIONAL WIN

A HORSE owned and trained in Mid Wales was the toast of punters after heroically winning the Welsh Grand National.

Mountainous, part-owned by Welshpool couple James and Jean Potter and trained by Presteigne handler Richard Lee romped to success at Chepstow at odds of 20/1 on Saturday.

The eight-year-old gelding, ridden by Paul Moloney, scooped the £50,000 first prize on Saturday after overcoming the challenge of runner-up Hawkes Point and the legendary Tidal Bay, both trained by former champion trainer Paul Nicholls.

The result – the second time Mr Lee has trained the winner of the 3m 5f marathon in the past three years after scooping the race with Le Beau Bai in 2011 – was a huge result for local punters who back his horses.

It was also the biggest success the Potter family have achieved in their white, red and green silks.

Mr Potter said: "I am chuffed to bits. We are Welsh and it is marvellous, tremendous and just brilliant to win the Welsh Grand National. It was a terrific race and he showed incredible stamina

by Andrew Morris

to win. I am speechless.

"We are absolutely chuffed to bits and I still almost can't believe it. It was a marvellous training performance by Richard Lee, who has his stables on the Powys border at Presteigne and a great ride from jockey Paul Moloney."

"As both myself and co-owner Dai Walters are Welshmen it really does mean everything to us to win this race with a horse we share and to bring the trophy home was magnificent. We were down at Chepstow for the race but came

home at night and had a quiet celebration as a family and we have watched the race a few times since."

Mr Potter added: "We will take it day by day with him now, but I suppose the dream would be if Aintree got a lot of rain in April, because the key to him running well is soft or heavy ground."

"Richard has always said he was a Welsh Grand National horse in the making and he was proved right, it was an incredible feeling."

Thrilled

"The horse is in good shape since the race. He was tired after it, but is doing really well now and we are happy with him."

Mr Lee, who trains at Byton, just over the Powys border in Herefordshire, added: "I guess I am an honorary Welshman now. It is just as good a feeling to win it for a second time and I am absolutely thrilled."

"It is great when a plan works like this. I said when he first came into the yard as a five-year-old that he was a Welsh National horse in the making and he has proved that."

"I couldn't believe how well he was going. Paul (Moloney) gave him an intel-



Welshpool couple James and Jean Potter, who won the Coral Welsh Grand National at Chepstow with their horse Mountainous, at their stables with the trophy

ligent ride and got a breather into him. I was also delighted with how my other horse, Knock A Hand ran under Richard Johnson too."

Punters were also quick to send their congratulations to connections.

Adam Miller, 28, from Welshpool, said: "I always


follow Richard Lee's horses and I knew he was confident of a good run from both of his horses in the race. That it was a Welshpool owned horse makes it doubly sweet."

Glyn Davies, Montgomeryshire MP, added: "It was good to see Mountainous win the Welsh Grand

National at Chepstow, owned by James Potter who is converting Leighton Farm, near Welshpool, into an equestrian centre.

"James is making a huge investment in the area and I hope someday a horse trained there may follow in Mountainous' footsteps. Congratulations all."

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